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## PREFATORY NOTE

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## PROPERTIUS' SINGLE BOOK

BY BROOKS OTIS

PROPERTIUS is in many respects the most enigmatic of all Roman poets. There are problems enough presented by Virgil or Horace, Catullus or Lucretius, even Tibullus and Ovid: yet their meaning is not obscure in the same sense or to the same degree as that of Propertius. We can debate who Lesbia was or whether Corinna ever existed but we can hardly deny that Catullus was actually in love with a real girl or that Ovid was writing with his tongue in his cheek. There may be irony and ambiguity in Lucretius and Virgil, but these, if present, do not in the least obliterate the quite serious philosophy and patriotism. Tibullus may carry a load of hidden meaning under his very smooth surface but we know at least that the ancients appreciated the same qualities that we do: the neat and elegant style (*tersus et elegans*), that easy verse that still pleases the schoolboy. But Propertius? There is enough conventionality to make us doubt the truth of almost all his amatory experiences. There is enough disconcerting truth to make us doubt the conventionality. There is irony where we should expect seriousness; seriousness where we should expect irony; emotion, yes — but an emotion that defies analysis or explanation. Even on the verbal level he baffles, and the bafflement is not due only to the manuscripts.

It cannot, I think, be said that the *meaning* or poetical sense of Propertius has received the same attention as his *text*.<sup>1</sup> The major "line" of most scholars or critics has been a biographical one based on the tacit assumption that Propertius was talking, more or less like a romantic poet or like Catullus, about his own actual love experiences. In the last decade or so, however, there has been a distinct change in the climate of Propertian opinion. This is as yet undefined: there is certainly nothing like a new consensus on Propertius.

In general I would subscribe to the "approach" (not, at all points, to the actual interpretations) of Archibald Allen's excellent essay: *Sunt qui Propertium Malint*. But it is obvious that this is hardly more than a first approximation to what might be called a responsible exegesis of Propertius. Allen discusses each of the poems as a more or less discrete unit and treats only two or three in any detail. But I am altogether very doubtful that we are yet ready to consider Propertius *en bloc*, in respect

to all four books of poems or his total *œuvre*.<sup>2</sup> We are, however, in a better position to explain (or try to explain) the *Monobiblos*, or, more specifically, the first nineteen poems of Book I as they are now enumerated (actually, as we shall see, the number is almost certainly twenty). The recent reconstruction by Otto Skutsch<sup>3</sup> of the schema, or plan, of these poems marks in my view a wholly new stage of Propertian scholarship and criticism even if Skutsch has, with admirable restraint, limited himself to the fact rather than the *raison d'être* of Propertius' plan. Yet he has shown, I believe, that these poems form a quite intricate unity so that any attempt to consider single poems in isolation from the *ensemble* can quite well lead to serious errors of interpretation. Putting this another way, I will be bold enough to say that we now know, up to a point at least, the plan of these twenty poems and can therefore attempt an interpretation of them such as has not been possible before. This in my view will in part validate Allen's general approach — the approach from the "conventions" and "models," rather than from the largely fictitious, or at any rate ambiguous, autobiography of the poet — and will permit considerably greater accuracy or precision of exegesis. Propertius will still remain enigmatic but not, perhaps, quite so enigmatic as he has heretofore been.

## II

Unfortunately we cannot start directly with the *Monobiblos*. It had been preceded by the four books of Cornelius Gallus' amatory elegies and was in fact a continuation of Gallus' work or, putting it more exactly, was another cycle of love elegies constructed on the Gallan model.<sup>4</sup> It is quite pointless, therefore, to interpret Propertius without also saying something about his predecessor. But this is not easy, since, as all the literary histories tell us, we possess only one line of Gallus' love elegies.

Yet it is not necessary to subscribe to an absolute skepticism at this point. We do not know very much about Gallus' actual poems but we do know a good deal about what they were like as a genre, or species, of love poetry. The important fact is that they were conventional as the poems of Catullus and (presumably) his contemporaries (I refer particularly to Varro, Calvus, and Valerius Cato<sup>5</sup>) were not. Here indeed we reach the very center or critical point of our problem. What was "conventional" as distinguished from "personal" or in this sense "unconventional," love poetry?

Let us, by way of answer, examine the "personal," or "unconventional," love poems of Catullus. If one approaches them, expecting to

find an unmediated expression of actual, personal experience, he will be considerably disappointed. As I have shown elsewhere,<sup>6</sup> a number of the elegiac poems (specifically nos. 70, 72, 73, 75, 76, 85) are related, and describe what is clearly a personal experience of love in despair. The famous 85:

Odi et amo. Quare id faciam fortasse requiris.  
Nescio sed fieri sentio et excrucior

seems, on the face of it, a wonderfully compressed statement of the more elaborate 76. There Catullus expresses his disillusionment (Lesbia has repeatedly played him false and betrayed all his devotion to her), yet prays for release from the passion he still feels. Lesbia still torments him, still makes him suffer (76.10):

Quare cur tu te iam amplius excrucies?

he asks himself. He wants now not a return of her affection for him but an absolute riddance (line 25):

Ipse valere opto et taetrum hunc deponere morbum.

The fact is that, as in 85, he loves and hates her at one and the same time. The question of 76.10 (*Quare tu te . . . excrucies?*) is also answered by the baffled asseveration of 85: *Nescio sed . . . excrucior*. He does not know why he still loves, still indulges in what can only be torment — but he does. He hates *and* loves (85): he should conquer his malaise whether he can or cannot (*Hoc facias sive id non pote sive pote*, 76). The same baffling tension is more briefly expressed in 75, but there the antithesis is between liking or respect (*bene velle*) and love (*amare*). He cannot now like her (no matter what she does) but he still loves her. But in 72 we are confronted by the same opposition (lines 7–8):

amantem injuria talis [i.e. such harm  
as Lesbia has done to him]

Cogit amare magis sed bene velle minus.

This is also the liking or respect (*bene velle*) that, in 73, he can no longer feel for the friend who has betrayed him (doubtless with Lesbia), though here there is no *love* that can still bind him to the friend as he is still bound to Lesbia. But 72 marks the conclusion of the earlier stage of his love described in 70:

70.1 Nulli se dicit mulier mea nubere malle  
Quam mihi non si se Iuppiter ipse petat.  
72.1 Dicebas quondam solum te nosse Catullum  
Lesbia, nec, praë me velle tenere Iovem.

The conventionality of the motif — the folly of lovers' vows — conceals a quite unconventional idea — that the lover (Catullus) has kept faith while the beloved (Lesbia) has not. There is *pietas*, true devotion in his passion (he loves her, not as a vulgar *amator* but as a father loves his children, 72.4–5) and the least the gods can do for him is to repay his *pietas* by release from his bondage of hate-in-love (76.26). The hate-in-love is thus the final stage in his consciousness of betrayal, the passion that yet outlasts the *fides*. There is here, it is apparent, a cycle of elegiac poems which describe a single experience that is undoubtedly real and personal.

Yet it is also apparent that Catullus has used Greek models. Here the essential points have been made by Otto Weinreich and Oskar Hezel,<sup>7</sup> though neither has fully realized the interrelations of these Catullus poems in a little "cycle" of their own. Weinreich has shown in his discussion of the *odi et amo* that an original experience (an *Urerlebnis*) has been, as it were, "precipitated" or given form by a literary model, a *Bildungserlebnis*, in this case the Hellenistic epigram (e.g. Meleager in *Anth. Pal.* V.24, Philodemos in V.107, or more particularly the anonymous but older *Anth. Pal.* XII 103; cf. also *ibid.* V 163, V 283, 241, or the sportive word play of Nicarchus, *ibid.* XI 252). But all of the epigrams describe *love* and *hate* as opposites (or, like Nicarchus' *paignion*, play on the double sense of *φιλέω*, *kiss* and *love*): none of them expresses the Catullan sentiment of a true mixture, or union, of hate and love. Again it is quite obvious that Catullus 70 is based or modeled on an epigram of Callimachus (*Anth. Pal.* V 6; Pfeiffer II *Ep.* 25 p. 87) but that the Catullan situation is wholly different: Callimachus writes of a foresworn lover who leaves his girl for a boy; Catullus only of the inconstancy (not yet fully realized) of *mulier mea*, obviously, as the pendant 72 clearly shows, Lesbia herself. The whole cycle (i.e. 70, 72, 73, 75, 76, 85), therefore, can be described as a fusion of several Greek epigrammatic motifs in a connected series of elegies dealing with a single but temporally extended love-experience of the poet. What is important and what clearly makes the poetry move us is the underlying experience.

The nature of this experience is both personal and Roman (in the sense of un-Greek). The poet has reached a stage where he loathes the love that binds him. He wants to break away and cannot. He has lost all respect or liking for Lesbia — whatever she says or does he cannot believe or trust her any more — but he is still enslaved to her, still tormented by his passion. Such a situation might seem (as indeed in Catullus it *is*: the more we study the conventional motifs he used, the



greater our sense of his difference *from*, almost his inversion *of*, them) to be quite original and unique. Yet surely the poetry of Gallus reveals a very similar point of view or "love-experience." Consider Virgil's description of Gallus' plight in *Eclogue* 10: Gallus is represented as saying (lines 56-69):

"non me ulla vetabunt  
frigora Parthenios canibus circumdare saltus.  
iam mihi per rupes videor lucosque sonantis  
ire, libet Partho torquere Cydonia cornu  
spicula — tamquam haec sit nostri medicina furoris,  
aut deus ille malis hominum mitescere discat.  
iam neque Hamadryades rursus neque carmina nobis  
ipsa placent; ipsae rursus concedite silvae.  
non illum nostri possunt mutare labores,  
nec si frigoribus mediis Hebrumque bibamus,  
Sithoniasque nives hiemis subeamus aquosae,  
nec si, cum moriens alta liber aret in ulmo,  
Aethiopum versemus ovis sub sidere Cancri.  
omnia vincit Amor: et nos cedamus Amori."

He is of course represented as the Daphnis of Theocritus I — the wonderful neatherd who so inexplicably dies "from love." But the "dying" in Virgil is not literal: this is not the dying and resurrected Daphnis of *Eclogue* 5 but only Gallus in a sort of Daphnic costume. The unworthy love from which Gallus is perishing (*indigno . . . Gallus amore peribat*) is his unfortunate devotion to Lycoris who has with cruel perfidy followed another (*alium*) to the harsh snows of an Alpine encampment. Gallus might enjoy the quiet life of a simple Arcadian shepherd if he were not bound by his military duties and, above all, if Lycoris had not left him. As it is, he must endure his harsh fate: there is no medicine for his *furor* (line 60), nothing but submission to the *Amor* (line 69) who conquers all things.

No one, I think, who reads the tenth Eclogue can escape the obvious conventionality of the sentiments expressed in it. Gallus' "dying for love" is not surely a reality, but the pose or attitude taken in his Lycoris-elegies. He is the jealous lover of Propertius I, 11 and 12 (Cynthia's absence at Baiae), or, more particularly, of I, 8 (her contemplated trip overseas — or, again, to the Alpine snows) and he, like Propertius, will go off to the woods, carve his beloved's name on the trees, and so on. In one sense he recognizes his love as unworthy, a *furor*, a destructive thing, from which he longs for release in the Arcadian countryside; but, in another sense, he completely and quite

rhetorically succumbs to it. No matter what he may do, nothing — no toils or pains — can change his love (*non illum nostri possunt mutare labores*, line 64). *Amor, crudelis Amor* (with a capital A) has him in thrall.

It is surely not particularly difficult to see what has happened. Catullus and, in a sense that we cannot now fathom, such contemporaries of Catullus as Calvus and Valerius Cato, had written short lyrics (the famous *nugae*) and elegies about their love. Catullus, at any rate, had fashioned some of them into a cycle about his love for Lesbia, and the course of that love had given them a particular character — the tension of emotions that a lover experiences for a faithless object of his love. This was quite different — different indeed in *kind* — from the usual obstacles of true love (the sort of thing we find in New Comedy). Even though the words were often identical with those of the *νέα* and especially of Hellenistic epigram, the substance was not. There has been a vast amount of discussion of the “origin” of the Roman amatory elegy but no trace of a conceivable Greek model has been left. The epigrams of the Palatine Anthology are quite generic — the experiences are typical and fairly impersonal — and there is no trace at all of a concrete, temporally extended cycle of Greek love poems such as might conceivably have influenced Catullus. (We can at least be reasonably sure of how he copied Sappho since we possess a very revealing instance in his paraphrase of the *φαίνεται μοι κείνος ἴσος θεοῖσιν*.) So it was to Catullus, surely, and perhaps Calvus or Cato, that Gallus must have looked when he also contemplated a cycle of elegiac love poems on his harsh mistress, Cytheris-Lycoris.<sup>8</sup> The difference lay in the obvious fact that what to the one was short poems or “trifles” (*nugae*) from his own life, was to the other a deliberate piece of literature or authorship. Four *books* of elegies were obviously a bid for fame and prestige. Luck<sup>9</sup> has argued with a great deal of persuasiveness that a notion common to Tibullus, Propertius, and Ovid — that of the girl as constituting the poet’s very *ingenium* (*ingenium nobis ipsa puella facit*. Prop. II 1.4) — was original with Gallus. Indeed, Martial gives us the line (8.73.6):

*ingenium Galli pulchra Lycoris erat*

and this, as Luck suggests, is very likely a close approximation to an actual line of Gallus. What Gallus seems to have done, therefore, was to reduce the Catullus-Lesbia situation to an exercise of *ingenium*, a literary theme — the theme of love’s blind slavery, or *servitium*, to an obdurate and faithless girl. He is faithful to her though she is not faithful to him and it is just this faith in faithlessness, this hopeless con-

stancy, this willingness to suffer or inability not to suffer, that constitutes the essence of the *amor*. It is Catullus reduced to a literary convention. We need not suppose that all personal experience was thereupon banished from amatory elegy but we must, I think, accept the conventionalization. It was, however (as we have just seen), a Roman and a relatively recent convention, and not in the least Greek. Yet it is easy to see that the mere adoption of the convention could not but change the poet's attitude toward all the Greek love motifs. These could now be much more easily assimilated to the central idea of love's *servitium*. All the antics of the stage lover — the lover so classically described by Lucretius (IV) — could now be attributed to the poet-writer's own *ego*. But behind this stock figure — the typical lover of Greek comedy and epigram — lay the example and experience of Catullus. This peculiar fusion of Greek and Roman conventions was the chief contribution of Gallus to Propertius.

### III

Skutsch<sup>10</sup> has pointed out that the first nineteen poems of Propertius I (the *Monobiblos* in the strict sense) are arranged in four groups of five poems each. Their symmetry is obvious: the first and last groups contain exactly the same number of distichs or couplets (88 each)<sup>11</sup> and the two middle groups contain 71 and 70 distichs respectively. Furthermore, the two middle groups are arranged in an obvious pattern as shown in Table 1. The two Tullus poems (6 and 14) enclose one set of Ponticus poems (7 and 9) and one set of Gallus poems (11 and 12) while in the middle of each group are doublets of poems to Cynthia (her projected trip overseas, her outing at Baiae).

TABLE I

6	Tullus and Propertius
7	Warning to Ponticus
8A	Fear (Cynthia)
8B	Fear dispelled (Cynthia)
9	Warning to Ponticus come true
10	Gallus' love
11	Fear (Cynthia)
12	Fear confirmed (Cynthia)
13	Gallus' love
14	Tullus and Propertius

But Skutsch has not offered any reasons for these striking symmetries or tried to accommodate this remarkable structure, or form, to the over-all *meaning* or sense of the *Monobiblos*. His scheme implies at least a correspondence between the first (1-5) and last (15-19) groups of poems (as well as between the two middle groups), and this becomes much clearer when we break down the poems of the two extreme groups into "stanzas," or "divisions." The "divisions" shown in Table 2 are of course based on my own reading of the poems but they

TABLE 2

Poems	Subject	Divisions (by no. of lines)
1	Propertius to Tullus	8-8-8-8-6=38
2	To Cynthia (unadorned is best)	8-16-8=32
3	The sleeping Cynthia	10-10-10-10-6=46
4	Propertius to Bassus (leave me to Cynthia)	10-4-10-4=28
5	Propertius to Gallus (leave Cynthia to me)	10-12-10=32
		Total: 176
15	Cynthia (adornment shows indifference)	8-16-8-10=42
16	The waking lover	8-8-8-8-8-8=48
17	Propertius away from Cynthia (sea)	10-4-10-4=28
18	Propertius away from Cynthia (woods)	10-12-10=32
19	To Cynthia: constancy till death	10-8-8=26
		Total: 176

are, I think, defensible on several grounds and can at least serve to introduce the problems with which I am chiefly concerned.

These correspondences can be more conveniently put thus:

TABLE 3

1 (8-8-8-8-6)	19 (10-8-8)
2 (8-16-8)	15 (8-16-8-10)
3 (10-10-10-10-6)	16 (8-8-8-8-8-8)
4 (10-4-10-4)	17 (10-4-10-4)
5 (10-12-10)	18 (10-12-10)



Poems 4 and 17, and again 5 and 18, contain exactly the same number of lines or distichs (14 distichs, or 28 lines, for 4 and 17; 16 distichs, or 32 lines, for 5 and 18). Furthermore the "stanzas," or divisions, are identical, as we shall see. This can hardly be an accident. The correspondence of 2 and 15 is also unmistakable. The other correspondences are perhaps, at first sight, less compelling but, as we also hope to prove, quite as certain as the others.<sup>12</sup>

Furthermore, the same sort of correspondence applies to the two middle groups. It is perfectly true that, as Skutsch (after M. Ites) has pointed out, there is an arrangement so that 6 and 14, 7 and 9, 10 and 13, and so on, correspond: two poems each to Tullus, Ponticus, and Gallus, with two sets of two poems to Cynthia (see Table 1 above). But there is also (as he does *not* point out) a system of correspondence, exactly like that of the two extreme groups, that can be expressed as follows:<sup>13</sup>

TABLE 4

6	To Tullus (6-6-6-6-6)	14	To Tullus (6-6-6-6)
7	To Ponticus (10-10-6)	10	To Gallus (10-10-10)
8A	Cynthia going (8-8-8-2)	11	Cynthia at Baiae (8-8-8-6)
8B	Cynthia stays (10-10)	12	Cynthia at Baiae (consequences) (10-10)
9	To Ponticus (8-10-10-6)	13	To Gallus (8-10-10-8)

Suspicious as one may be of symmetries, there is little reason to suspect this one: the numerical and "stanza" correspondences are (as we shall see) in each case backed by correspondences of subject matter or of recurring words and phrases. The problem is to get at its meaning. Is it a mere *jeu d'esprit*, a pleasant exercise in proportions and numerology? Or does it have some more important function? The first thing, perhaps, to be said about it is that it is hard to reconcile with uninhibited passion or "experience." The arrangement at the very least shows a concern with art, with careful workmanship, or with a neat balancing that points to design and a sense of form. Secondly, the correspondences should make us wary of a simple chronological or biographical approach to the poems: there is at least some indication of a unitary plan, of a carefully plotted ensemble, that is hardly consistent with a mere series of isolated efforts struck off in a succession of only biographically related "moments." We are driven, in short, to consider the *Monobiblos* as some sort of unity. And here the considerations

addressed above to Cornelius Gallus and to his "conventionalizing" of Catullus may help us. It is at least possible — if only by way of a working hypothesis — to look at the *Monobiblos* as an intricate counterpoint of conventional motifs, whatever else may underlie it. In that case its arrangement may point the way toward its unity or central viewpoint, or theme. I shall accordingly take the "corresponding" poems together and see where the correspondences can lead us.

1. Obviously there is something significant about 1 and 19, the first and last poems of the cycle of twenty. Certain similarities of the two leap at once to the eye. These, as well as the even more important differences, can best be brought out in comparative analysis of the two poems.

Poem 1 is clearly divided into four stanzas, or sections, of eight lines each with a six-line epilogue:

Lines 1-8 describe his plight: *Cynthia prima suis miserum me cepit ocellis*. Love has trampled on his pride. He now hates "chaste" [i.e. difficult, demanding, fastidious] girls like Cynthia, for *improbis Amor* (i.e. his bitter new love for Cynthia) has "taught" him to do so.<sup>14</sup> Even so his *furor* (his passion for her) had lasted a whole year and the "gods" are still against him (i.e. he still has no success in winning her affection).

Lines 9-16 abruptly (without apparent transition) turn to the mythical Milanion and the "labors" by which he finally "tamed" Atalanta. The myth is an *exemplum* with the moral clearly expressed (lines 15-16):

ergo velocem potuit domare puellam:  
tantum in amore *preces et bene facta valent*.

Lines 17-24 come back to his actual plight and apply the moral of lines 15-16 to himself: *in me tardus Amor non ullas cogitat artis*. No technique (such as that of the traditional or mythological lovers) can help him at this late stage of his amatory experience. He has been taken belatedly and thus defenseless: none of his former devices (*notas vias*) will work. He ironically addresses also the advocates of magic: if they can change his mistress's mind, then he will indeed believe in their omnipotence.

Lines 25-32 address the friends (*et vos*) who would recall him to reason even at this late stage. He will endure anything, go anywhere (where no woman can get him), if he can only utter the anger or contempt he feels (*sit modo libertas quae velit ira loqui*). The only people who should stay (i.e. stay with their loves in Rome and not escape from

them to the ends of the earth) are those who have it easy, are the equals, not the slaves, of their *inamoratae*.<sup>15</sup>

Lines 33-38 sum up the situation in a kind of recapitulation of the preceding stanza (first his own plight, *in me*; then the warning, *hoc moneo*), that breaks, in the last distich, into bitter prophecy. His nights are bitter: no moment gives release from his passion (*et nullo vacuus tempore deficit Amor*). This is the evil to avoid: let no one ever abandon his old, accustomed love for this! Yet if his warning comes too late, their recollection of Propertius' words will be sorrowful indeed!

That Propertius is here recalling the Catullan situation (in effect the *odi-amo*) is perfectly clear:

Catullus 76:19	<i>me miserum</i> adspicite
25	ipse <i>valere</i> opto et taetrum hunc deponere morbum
11: 1	Furi et Aureli, comites Catulli sive in extremos penetrabit Indos litus ut longe resonante Eoa
4	Tunditur unda
11:13	omnia haec, quaecumque feret voluntas Caelitum, temptare simul parati pauca nuntiate meae puellae
16	non bona dicta. (Then the harsh imprecation to Lesbia)

Propertius, like Catullus, is miserably enslaved and longs to be free. He has friends who would help him and he is prepared to fly with them to the ends of the earth and the sea: *ferre per extremas gentis et ferre per undas*.

And yet how different are the *tones* of the two poets! Propertius does not really want to flee. There is no actual Furius or Aurelius prepared to take him away with them. He rather accepts his plight and mentions the well-disposed "friends" (line 25) only to advise them not to stay for their own sakes if, that is, they lack the easy, reciprocated love that alone can make life endurable. Propertius' attitude is not that of Catullus but of Gallus — one of rhetorically resigned despair (*Ecl.* 10.64):

non illum [i.e. Amor] nostri possunt mutare labores  
nec si frigoribus mediis Hebrumque bibamus,  
Sithoniasque nives hiemis subeamus aquosae.

At first sight, indeed, Propertius' position seems very different from that of Gallus or, in this respect, from Catullus also. Catullus "hated" Lesbia because she had been unfaithful and had revealed herself as thoroughly untrustworthy and corrupt (the *bene velle* had gone): Gallus was overcome by Cytheris' desertion, her bitter journey to the Alps. But Propertius here "hates" Cynthia because she is obdurate, acts like a typical *casta puella* who will not look at a lover. But this is just the point. She is exacting, cruel, untameable, combining the morals of a *libertina* with the elusiveness and *castitas* of a real *ingenua*. Though Propertius fully recognizes the desirability of a secure, mutual *amour* (where the beloved is neither difficult nor unfaithful), he sees clearly that such love is not for him. But it is here the type of love, rather than his personal stake in it, that is emphasized. The hortatory nature of Propertius' poem is itself the clue to his meaning. It is directly addressed to Tullus (line 9) and his other friends (such as, we must surmise, the Ponticus and Gallus who are forever advising him for his own good) and warns *them* almost as if to anticipate a later "I told you so!" Furthermore, it is clearly a programmatic piece: this is the theme of a whole *book* of poems, the proem to a literary work that sets the key for the whole. The very fact that Propertius, like Gallus, talks of *crudelis* or *improbis* or *tardus Amor* (hypostasized); that Venus makes her appearance; that the apparatus of mythology is drawn upon; that the stock *labores* (*Milanion . . . nullos fugiendo . . . labores*) are enumerated; that there is stated to be no *medicina furoris*, or charm, that can work — all put the Catullan emotion on a very reduced and conventionalized level. The obvious allusion to Meleager (*Anth. Pal.* XII 101) in the first stanza is proof enough of the literary intention even though Meleager is clearly *Catullanized* (if the neologism can be pardoned). Meleager's boy boasts of trampling on the proud lover but Meleager makes light of the boast: Eros trampled on Zeus himself for that matter! Yet though the trampling is ostensibly serious and tragic in Propertius (as it is not in Meleager) —

4            et caput impositis pressit Amor pedibus  
donec me docuit castas odisse puellas —

the pretty hellenistic image serves effectively to tone down the Catullan intensity. In all this Propertius was clearly following in the footsteps of Gallus.

This is one aspect of Propertius' *amor*. We find a somewhat different aspect in the poem's mate or correspondent, 19. It falls into three stanzas of 10, 8, and 8 lines respectively.

Lines 1-10 express Propertius' fear that Cynthia will not weep for him when he is dead. It is not death, it is the defection of her love after his death, that he dreads (lines 1-4). He is like Protesilaus who could not rest in Hades until he had revisited Laodamia.

Lines 11-18 apply the sentiment directly to himself: he is even known in Hades as Cynthia's *imago*. All the famous heroines may come to him; none will vie with Cynthia for his devotion even though she lingers on earth to a very late old age.

Lines 19-26 then directly accost Cynthia: *quae* (i.e. all the desiderated emotions) *tu viva mea possis sentire favilla!* But he is afraid that some *iniquus Amor* may distract her from such funereal devotion. Therefore (the transition is effectively abrupt) let the two of them rejoice now while they can

quare, dum licet, inter nos laetemur amantes:  
non satis est ullo tempore longus amor.

The last stanza here clearly echoes the last stanza of Poem 1. We need only compare 1.33-34:

in me nostra Venus noctes exercet *amaras*  
et *nullo* vacuus tempore defit amor

with 19:20:

tum mihi non *ullo* mors sit *amara loco*

(if, that is, Cynthia does feel for his ashes) or, above all, with 19.26:

non satis est *ullo tempore* longus amor.

In 19 no place can be bitter (not even Hades) if Cynthia loves him; no time can be long enough for love. In 1 even his bed is bitter and there is no time in which he is free of his bitterness.

It seems impossible to explain this "contradiction" biographically. For one thing Propertius is clearly making a cross-reference. For another, there is no temporal contrast as in Catullus 70 and 72:

- |      |  |
|------|--|
| 70.1 | Nulli se <i>dicit</i> mulier mea nubere malle<br>quam mihi, non si se Iuppiter ipse petat.                               |
| 72.1 | <i>Dicebas quandam</i> solum te nosse Catullum,<br>Lesbia, nec prae me velle tenere Iovem.<br><i>dilexi tum</i> te . . . |
| 72.5 | nunc te <i>cognovi</i> : quare etsi impensium <i>uror</i><br>multo mi tamen es vilior et levior.                         |



To be sure, 19 starts with a *nunc*: *nunc ego non tristis vereor, mea Cynthia, Manis*, but the time element is vague. Furthermore, are we to take the pretty picture of the weeping Cynthia and the poet's ashes as a more than conventional sentiment? Propertius himself has his doubts. The point of the poem comes surely at the end: "Because I know you won't do as I'd like at my funeral (*quare*, line 25), we must rejoice when we can — now (*dum licet . . . lactemur*).” The remarkable last line (surely one of the best that Propertius ever wrote):

non satis est ullo tempore longus amor

is a programmatic answer to the "anguish" of 1.34 (the conclusion of the personal aspect of the last stanza, *in me . . .*, just before the final hortatory words, *hoc, moneo*):

et nullo vacuus tempore deficit amor.

The oppressive burden has been lifted: the anguish assuaged. Or, more exactly: Cynthia is *both* a harsh burden that never leaves Propertius *and* a joy that never satiates. Each aspect is part of the picture. And each aspect is Catullan. There is the joy of Catullus 5 (*Vivamus . . . atque amemus*) and the despair of 85 (*odi et amo*) and 76. The difference is that the one picture is biographical (there was the joy but it gave way to despair) and that the other (Propertius') is not. The real *amour* of Propertius for Cynthia is surely neither just the despair of 1 nor the joyful (though ironically apprehensive) affection of 19. Rather the *Monobiblos* is intended to end on a mood different from its beginning. The contradiction is designed and explicit.

This contradiction — or, perhaps better, contrapuntal difference — is also brought out by the different forms of address. Poem 1 is formally addressed to Tullus (line 9) but more generally to all his friends (*at vos, et vos, vos remanete*, and so on) and to the public at large (*si quis . . . tardas adverterit auris*); Cynthia is not addressed but referred to in the third person and only in the first line (*Cynthia prima . . .*). What he really describes is the action of *Amor* (*Amor . . . caput pressit pedibus*) or *Venus* (*in me nostra Venus*). 19, on the contrary, at once appeals to Cynthia (*non ego nunc tristis vereor, mea Cynthia, Manis*) and juxtaposes his own Hades-fantasy (lines 11–18) to his knowledge of her character, in an intimate "dialogue" between them both: *quam vereor Cynthia . . . quare dum licet inter nos laetemur amantes*. Both Walther Abel and Hermann Tränkle<sup>16</sup> have rightly insisted upon the difference between Propertius and Tibullus in their use of the "Anredeform," or appeal

to a second person or persons. In Tibullus the poems tend to become monologues, and the appeal to the second person is largely hortatory and formal (somewhat as that of Propertius himself in 1) but in Propertius generally the "thou" or "you" has a special personal force and the relation of the poet's *ego* to the other person is *dramatic* or that of a dramatic dialogue (even though the other party is not explicitly quoted). In this sense we can say that 1 is formal, theoretical, hortatory exposition; 19 is actual, dramatically living: in it the poet himself discusses his fantasy with Cynthia and arrives at a gently skeptical conclusion with, therefore, a newly urgent insistence on the present reality. Yet 19, no less than 1, is *conventional*: we must not take the sentimentalized funeral at face value any more than the sentimental Hades. It is the fact that Propertius, in dialogue with Cynthia, can see through such fantasy that is here significant. Hence 19 is truly the "opposite" of 1. Only when we grasp the difference between Propertius and Tibullus in this crucial matter of the "Anredeform" (it is also reasonable to take Gallus as nearer to Tibullus than to Propertius) can we truly grasp their attitude toward convention. The *Monobiblos* is, so to speak, a curious mixture of Tibullus and Catullus: we cannot understand it unless and until we set the "outer-directed," or "Tibullan," 1 against the Catullan 19.

2. The parallelism of 2 and 15 is much more obvious than that of 1 and 19 (in fact, it is almost obtrusive) but, so far as I can discover, little or nothing has been said of it by the commentators though some (as, for example, Camps) recognize its existence. Here again a brief synopsis of each is indispensable. Poem 2 falls into stanzas of 8, 16, and 8 lines:

Lines 1-8 state the theme: why all this adornment or dressing up, this spoiling of nature by artificial ("boughten") devices? There is no medicine for beauty: *nudus Amor formae non amat artificem*.

Lines 9-24 give a series of natural and mythological exempla: nature unadorned is best; Phoebe, Hilaira, Hippodamia, did not paint or jewel themselves. They had no wish to get lovers in a vulgar way: their modesty or chastity (*pudicitia*) was beauty enough.

Lines 25-32: but Propertius anticipates the success of his warning and exempla: he is not *now* afraid that Cynthia will prefer other men (*istis*: there is no reason to change the text of the major MSS) to him. If she is lovely and loves one man (as, inferentially, Cynthia loves Propertius), a woman is adorned enough, especially when, as is true in Cynthia's case, she has so many talents and graces — all that both Venus and Minerva can give. These are the things that will

keep her pleasing to him, pleasing, that is, *if* she wearies of the wretched extravagances of her toilet (*taedia dum miserae sint tibi luxuriae*).

"The particular charm of the elegy," says Allen, "lies in the indirectness with which the poet has indicated the censure of his mistress." It is a "neat example of the lover's *blanditia*."<sup>17</sup> Obviously Cynthia is dressing up for her lovers (*other* than Propertius). But Propertius only suggests this *via* the mythological heroines (they had *pudicitia* and their attire showed it as Cynthia's did not). This is, I think, clearly the right interpretation (if the "censure" is not taken too seriously) and incidentally explains (as Allen himself does not specify) the much disputed line 25:

non ego nunc vereor ne sim tibi vilior istis:  
uni si qua placet, culta puella satest.

where the meaning is: "But now I'm not afraid of seeming inferior to those [i.e. your other lovers] in your eyes. If a girl has one lover that she pleases (and I'm the one, I know), she's cultivated enough." The implied moral is: "You don't need to dress up, because you already have me," though of course Propertius really knows that Cynthia is after other men (her extravagance is a sign that she really lacks *pudicitia*). Yet there is little here of the "misery" of 1. The tone in fact is unmistakably light and amusingly coy. The nature similes and the mythology are exaggerated to an almost comic degree and the comparison of Cynthia with Phoebe and Hippodamia, and of Propertius himself with his actual rivals (with the implication in line 25: "Surely I needn't fear comparison with *them*!"), underlines the comedy. He humorously takes it for granted that such a mythological moral lesson will do the trick: *non ego nunc vereor* or "*now* that I've warned you, I'm sure you'll treat me no less handsomely than those fine heroines did their men." There was a distinctly lighter side to Propertius' *amour*!

But Propertius could be much more direct. Poem 15, the companion piece of 2, is the proof. Here the stanzas (8-16-8-10 lines each) go as follows (each exactly corresponds to the analagous stanza in 2 with the exception of the additional last stanza):

Lines 1-8. He starts by referring to his long-standing knowledge of Cynthia's *levitas*. Yet he had never before this thought her guilty of perfidy! But now here he is in real danger (the exact danger is not specified), and she arranges her hair and face and puts on jewels as if she were an ordinary beauty going out with a new man.

Lines 9-24 describe the faithful heroines of myth: Calypso, Hypsipyle, Alpheisiboea, and Evadne, the glory of Attic *pudicitia*. All of these



mourned in squalor for their men! Yet none of them could change Cynthia's character and make her, too, into a noble legend!

Lines 25-32 then return to the theme of Cynthia's perfidy or *perjury*, but with a distinctly new point of view. Cynthia should not endanger herself by denying her perjuries with false oaths to the gods. If she suffers in consequence, Propertius will suffer too. No matter what changes may take place, he will not change his love for her. She can be what she will, if not alienated from him (*sis quodcumque voles, non aliena tamen*, line 32).

Lines 33-42. Only let her not underestimate the value of the little eyes that she has sworn to tear out, if she prove false! Can she still raise them to the mighty sun without being conscious of her naughtiness (*nequitia*)? Why all these changes of color, these tears? They mark Propertius' ruin, even though he was about to warn similar lovers not to trust in *blanditiae*.

Here the adornment is an evident sign of Cynthia's falseness. To dress up at such a time (the time of Propertius' peril) could mean only one thing. Here the mythological heroines are only instances of what Cynthia can never be. She will never become a *fama pudicitiae*! Propertius is only afraid that her reiterated perjuries will do her harm. Whatever happens he will be faithful even if far less trustful. Again the tone is light, the mythology exaggerated as well as comically malapropos, the solicitude rhetorical. It is evident that the *blanditia* of 2 is not to be repeated or, rather, that the restraint of 2 is no more serious than the overt reproaches here. It is almost taken for granted that Cynthia is both light and deceiving. Even the *topos* of lovers' broken vows is exaggerated at Propertius' own expense. He resignedly sees the humor of his own advice to others.

The relation between 2 and 15 is thus in no sense biographical. It is rather one of designed correspondence and counterpoint. In the one (2) he pretends to believe; in the other (15) he fully recognizes the true meaning of Cynthia's adornment. But in both he takes her as lightly as she deserves to be taken. It is all a game. It is of course his accepted rôle to suffer, to be deceived. But he remains amused.

The parallelism of stanzas between 2 and 15 is exact (the initial stanza on adornment, the longer mythological stanza, the drawing of the moral in the third stanza) except for the final ten-line stanza of 15. This is in a sense puzzling. Line 32 (*sis quodcumque voles, non aliena tamen*) is a quite satisfactory ending and completes the comical movement from the heroines (that Cynthia can never emulate) to the resigned present: "You can now never become a *nobilis historia* but please

don't go too far with your perjuries: whatever you are, I only fear you won't be mine." The additional detail in lines 33-42 thus seems somewhat otiose. Yet it is, in another sense, a natural return on his rather excessive complaisance in line 32. The idea is: "Don't make such terrible threats (they are useless and dangerous) but how can you say all this and look so guilty? I'm a poor one to warn others against beguiling words!" It thus looks like a humorous refutation of the *blanditia* in 2: "*O nullis tutum credere blanditiis.*" In this sense we can take the stanza as a postscript to both 2 and 15, or the author's comment on the original doublet (i.e. 2 and 15.1-32). Neither Propertius nor Cynthia can really deceive the other and Propertius' courteous disbelief or veiled reproach in 2 was as useless as Cynthia's empty protestation here. To pretend that she had or could have *pudicitia* was absurd. Propertius takes her as she is: this too is part of his *servitium*.

But we must not miss the form and hence also the spirit in which these conventional ideas (especially of adornment as a bad sign) are set. Both 2 and 15 are implicit *dialogues* between Cynthia and the poet. Furthermore, both dialogues are dramatic: the ends mark a distinct advance on the beginnings. This "advance" really consists in a sort of ironical understanding between Cynthia and the poet. In addition to the stock motifs and the convention of *servitium amoris*, Propertius and Cynthia are ironically but unassailably present in the poems.

3. The parallelism of 3 and 16 is revealing. The situations seem at first sight quite different: 3 describes the poet's night visit to the sleeping Cynthia (he is the narrator); 16 is ascribed to the door (like Catullus 67, in part) but contains, as its essential content, the complaint of an excluded lover who is certainly the poet himself. But the different settings are a necessary part of the contrast intended. In 3 an elaborate background is provided for the speech of Cynthia that forms the climax and conclusion of the poem. In its turn, 16 provides a setting for the speech of Propertius. Each of the settings is designed to indicate the contrast: in 3 Cynthia is abandoned by Propertius but awakes to find herself confronting him in the regalia of his all-night dissipation; in 16 Propertius appeals to the door that separates him all night from a Cynthia supposedly in the arms of a rival. In 3 *he*, in 16 *she*, is to blame. Situations, attitudes, responses, are thus opposed to each other. In each case one of the pair is faithless, or supposedly faithless, and in each case the plight of the one is enough to move (actually or hypothetically) the remorse of the other. But behind these obvious contrasts lurks a more subtle and interesting identity.

The divisions of 3 are very well marked:

Lines 1-10 describe the sleeping Cynthia (as seen by the drunken, belated Propertius) by comparing her to a series of sleeping beauties from mythology: deserted Ariadne on the beach (before the entrance of Bacchus), Andromeda finally freed from the grim rocks, the Bacchante wearied from her dancing.

Lines 11-20 describe the lover's temptation and restraint: Love and Bacchus both urge him to approach, embrace, and kiss her, but he does not finally dare; he fears her well-known temper. He can only stand and watch her intently, as Argus watched Io.

Lines 21-30. Yet he adorns her with his reveler's garlands, plays with her hair, loads her slack hands with apples. Each sigh she makes in her sleep makes him apprehensive of her dreams. Only in this stanza does he actually address her: but she, of course, sleeps on.

Lines 31-38. But the full moonlight finally reaches her face and wakes her. She props herself on her elbow and reproaches him: So he has at last come back from some rival's house? Come back languid from dissipation in the night-time that was of right hers?

Lines 39-46 give her account of how she passed the time in her loneliness: she played the lyre, she spun the purple thread, she complained of the tediousness of waiting, and then she went to sleep; that was the final cure for her tears.

Here Propertius has softened a purely erotic or sexual Greek original into a quite different sort of poem. The well-known epigram of Paulus Silentiarius (*Anth. Pal.* V 275) is almost certainly no copy of Propertius: both poets go back to a much earlier source that Silentiarius, not Propertius, most closely reflects.<sup>18</sup> The lover finds the girl asleep, sexually attacks her, and then is upbraided by her in a brief speech. He has taken what she has often refused, even for money: she knows that, once satisfied, he will leave her and transfer his affections to another. Similarly, the idea of the moon coming through the window is to be found in an epigram of Philodemos (*Anth. Pal.* V 123) but treated in a purely erotic way. There the moon is the happy witness of the lovers' labors (τὰ φιλεύντων ἔργα). The moon herself knows all about it: she has often watched and amorously waked the sleeping Endymion.<sup>19</sup> It is clear that Propertius knew how such themes had been used, as lines 13-44:

et quamvis duplici correptum ardore iuberent  
hac Amor, hac Liber durus uterque deus.

and line 32:

luna moraturis sedula luminibus

sufficiently indicate.<sup>20</sup> But his reluctance to wake or molest the sleeping Cynthia is surely not due to modesty or bashfulness: he knows that he — her avowed slave — has neglected her (he has been “out on the town”) and he also knows her sharp temper (*expertae iungia saevitiae*). He has wasted *her* night, *her* love on others. But he also sees something erotic in her very repose (she is Ariadne before the entrance of Bacchus or a wearied Bacchante: *languida*, line 2, suggests the languish of dissipation and it is thus used by Cynthia of Propertius himself: *languidus exactis, ei mihi, sideribus*, line 38). His mood of mixed apprehension and guilt, enchantment (stanza 3), desire, drunken languish (the clumsily delicate attempts to adorn her with his reveler’s gifts), is broken by the solicitous moon (like the “busy old fool, unruly sun” of Donne and suggesting, of course, her own amorous curiosity about the sleeping Endymion). The timid lover is now ripe for a good tongue-lashing. But Cynthia pretends to be very virtuous: he is the dissipated reveler; she the cheated but faithful wife, almost like the chaste Lucretia whiling away her loneliness with solitary music and spinning. It is of course a preposterously exaggerated picture: her pose is far too virtuous to be real. (But its very virtue makes an attractive contrast to her crude defensiveness in II, 29.35–36.) It is obvious that she has him well under control and can depend upon his Catullan *fides*, or, more exactly, his bad conscience of the moment. That the *moon*, not his drunken amorousness should wake her, is the evident proof of his subjection to her exacting temperament. Yet the whole scene is not quite real. Propertius sees through Cynthia’s pretences as she sees through his clumsy solicitude. Here, in short, the purely erotic motifs of the Greek anthology are adjusted to the terms of the *servitium amoris*. The result is a curious incongruity, a singular irony, that is not without a decidedly erotic charm.

But in 16, the shoe is on the other foot.\* The door here belonged to an illustrious house with a history of triumphal ancestors, known above all for its chaste reputation, *Tarpeiae nota pudicitiae*. Now it is a place of nocturnal brawls and shameful exhibitions — all due to the vices of its infamous mistress (*infamis dominae*). The poet’s lament (in form, of course, a more or less typical *paraclausithyron*) is thus contrasted with

\* I leave off analysis of poems by “stanzas” or line-divisions from here on. While there is an almost exact correspondence between the relevant stanzas of 2 and 15, there is not between 1 and 19 (see above) or here (between 3 and 16). The correspondence of stanzas is not, it seems to me, of decisive importance except in 2 and 15. It exists for 4 and 17, 5 and 18, but does not, so far as I can see, greatly affect our understanding of these four poems.



the worthlessness of its object. Yet it is the door that he so undeservedly upbraids, calls ungrateful and cruel. He knows that Cynthia (she is not named: the lover is speaking to her door and thus naturally refers to her as *domina* only) is lying in the arms of another lover, yet feels that she could not be so hard-hearted (that would be beyond the reach of even stone and iron) as not to pity him and weep unwilling tears were she actually to hear his dim voice through some crack or tiny aperture:

- 27      O utinam traiecta cava mea vocula rima  
              percussas dominae vertat in auriculas!  
              sit licet et saxo patientior . . .
- 31      non tanen illa suos poterit compescere ocellos  
              surget et invitis spiritus in lacrimis.

The door is filled with a sense of the complaint's undeservedness: it is not *he* that is cruel but Cynthia that is vicious. He stands for the house's reputation that she has dragged in the mud and exposed to such unseemly reproaches.

What is noticeable here is the *indirectness* of the reproach to Cynthia. The direct censure is put in the mouth of the door. The lover only censures her indirectly: "Even if she were as hard-hearted as possible, she would surely pity me could she but hear." As it is, his laments are only for the breeze, and she lies in the arms of another (lines 33-34). The reproach to the door is thus a device for sparing Cynthia, for expressing as it were the poet's continued devotion despite her faithlessness and obduracy. Yet the device is ironical. The stock "mistress" of epigram and the *νέα* is now represented as the truly disreputable tenant of a sadly run-down Roman mansion. Propertius knows and shows that he knows what she is. Her pose of 3 (the lorn sleeper awakened to confront the author of her loneliness) is now quite deflated. But so, by reciprocal action, does 3 deflate the lover's pose here; he is not just a plaintive and pathetic *exclusus amator*. Once more we see opposite aspects of amatory convention set against one another.<sup>21</sup>

Yet the last word is not ironical. There is a tie between Cynthia and Propertius which explains the tenderness under the irony of 3, and the ultimate disbelief in her hard-heartedness that obliquely emerges in 16:

surget et invitis spiritus in lacrimis.

The "neatness" of the contrast — when Cynthia is at home, alone, accessible, the lover is not there; when the lover is clamorously present, Cynthia and her paramour have locked him out — is, almost, that of a

cleverly arranged comedy; it is the overtones, the flow of empathy between Propertius and Cynthia, which betray something more. 3 and 16, unlike most of the other Cynthia poems (2, 8A, 11, 15, 17, 18, 19; 8B and 12 are untypical, as we shall see), are not addressed to her. There is a brief appeal to her in the third stanza of 3 (specifically at lines 22 and 27) but this is only a temporary lapse from the objectivity of the poem as a whole. Cynthia is asleep, or else directly talking in her own words, and the poet looks at her and listens to her without engaging in a dialogue with her. We can say, indeed, that the poet sees both her and himself from without: he sees a new Cynthia when he sees her asleep, and the sight gives a new sharpness as well as tenderness to his drunken senses (*ebria . . . multo . . . vestigia Baccho*); this is why her words come to him as an objective experience and are put in quotes just as she delivers them. But the same thing is true of 16: here he himself is seen objectively (not by Cynthia because it is of course her faithless indifference that he wants to emphasize), but by the door to whom his own words are anything but sympathetic.

Each poem, however, is also a way of showing Cynthia how he feels about her. Together they supplement and add veracity to the other poems where he is directly addressing or appealing to her. In other words, the temporary abandonment of the direct appeal or "dialogue" (where Cynthia is addressed in the second person) gives a new force to their relationship. The very lapse into direct address at 3.22 and 3.27 shows how difficult and how new the situation really is: the lovers' rapport is changed but Propertius is not yet quite aware of it. The paraclausithyron (16) is much colder, precisely because there is no rapport at all: Cynthia ignores Propertius' presence and cannot hear his song. In short, the direct emotion of the poems addressed to Cynthia is set in relief by the *description* of emotion in these two poems as they, in turn, gain salience and color from the comparison. In the epigrams of the *Palatine Anthology* it does not matter whether the highly generic lovers are named, unnamed, or put in the first, second, or third persons: there is no true individuality or sustained personal relationship. How different is the case here! Precisely because of the interplay of personalities in the whole *Monobiblos*, both "dialogue" and description gain a wholly different personal force.

4. Poems 4, 5 must be taken with 17, 18: in the first sequence (4, 5) Propertius' love for Cynthia is threatened by the counter-attractions insisted upon by Bassus or by the putative rivalry of Gallus. In the second (17, 18), the threat is due only to themselves: in 17 Propertius

unsuccessfully "flees" Cynthia on a sea-voyage; in 18 he bewails in solitude her unmerited reproaches for his own actions and words. The separation of the lovers is only a prospect in 4, 5 (Cynthia is fully capable of handling both Bassus and Gallus and nothing can affect Propertius' devotion): in 17 and 18 it is a reality, for Propertius is now out on the ocean or in the desolate woods. Furthermore, the points of view are contrapuntal: 4 and 5 are defenses against external attack and criticism based on ignorance. Bassus in praising other girls (4) does not know the true charms of Cynthia, her true *fides*, or her fierce temper (she can and will express her resentment of his efforts); Gallus, in threatening to pursue Cynthia himself (5), is quite ignorant of the pain of *servitium* to such a girl (line 19) or of the absence of any *medicine* for it. 17 and 18, on the contrary, describe the poet's own experience and through this the essential force of the tie that neither Bassus nor Gallus can disrupt. Cynthia is surely better than the ocean and the prospect of shipwreck on a desolate shore (17.15-18):

nonne fuit levius *dominae pervincere mores*  
(quamvis dura, tamen rara puella fuit),  
quam sic ignotis circumdata litora silvis  
cernere . . . ?

Even death, with her as mourner, is preferable to a death like this! In 18 Propertius proves his devotion to her by confining his complaints to the desolate woods. The isolation of his *dolor* — its limitation to the trees and birds — expresses his *fides*: he has neither cheated her with another girl nor maligned her in poetry (*carmina*) to the ears of others.

But there is also another contrast where 4 and 17, 5 and 18, are particularly juxtaposed. 4 contrasts Cynthia's charm with the legendary beauties of Bassus' comparisons; 17 shows it set off by the sheer desolation of the wild sea and shore. 5 expresses the cruelty or harshness of Cynthia by way of warning to Gallus; 18 expresses it by way of defense to Cynthia herself. The *servitium amoris* with which Gallus is, somewhat playfully, threatened in 5:

19      tum grave *servitium* nostrae cogere puellae  
             discere et exclusum quid sit abire domum;

is uncomplainingly borne in 18:

23      An tua quod peperit nobis iniuria curas?  
             quae solum tacitis cognita sunt foribus.  
             omnia consuevi timidus *perferre* superbae  
             iussa neque arguto facta dolore queri.

In other words, 4 and 5 express to his two friends the theory, the *raison d'être*, of his love (the attraction and the *dolor*, the charm and the cruelty); 17 and 18 express its reality as he himself sees and knows it, as he himself is excluded and serenades the silent door. The loneliness of Propertius in 17 and 18 (the sea, bleak shore, and desolate woods are simply its symbols) is essentially his sense of absence from Cynthia, and this absence (whether caused by his flight or her own anger) is the catalyst as well as the expression of his *dolor*: without her he is nothing. This explains the *servitium amoris* and the *fides*: neither Bassus nor Gallus can gauge either the attraction or the suffering that Cynthia represents. Propertius' inner feelings are thus set in the context of his outer situation: this is a state of mind or heart that his friends cannot understand without intolerable grief to themselves.

The delicacy with which the sense of solitude — the wildness and desert bleakness — of nature are set against the poet's feelings explains much of the charm of these poems.<sup>22</sup> In 17 he begins with an appeal to his own folly: *Et merito, quoniam potui fugisse puellam!* but converts this into an appeal to Cynthia's tenderness as he represents his danger of shipwreck to be her excessive revenge (*Quia etiam absenti prosunt tibi Cynthia venti*). She has exacted punishment enough: can she witness his death with dry eyes, can she do without his bones to mourn over? But this leads to a new appeal (lines 15f) to himself: how much better to have died at home! There (*illic*) she would truly have mourned his death with the offering of her own hair. The anger of Cynthia is thus turned against itself; the contrast between his isolation (*desertas alloquor alcyonas*) and their love is both an appeal to her and an appeal to himself. Similarly in 18, the old *topos* of the complaint to empty nature that we find already prefigured in Gallus (*Ecl.* 10.52):

certum est in silvis inter spelaea ferarum  
malle pati tenerisque meos incidere amores  
arboribus

is converted into an instance of his *fides*. He goes where he can utter his grief without betraying her cruelty to the world (18.3):

Hic licet occultos proferre impune dolores  
si modo sola queant saxa tenere fidem.

His isolation is his own grief but it is also a demonstration of his loyalty and an appeal to Cynthia's latent love. The tenderness of these poems (17, 18) is thus more than conventional though it is not, surely, tenderness *tout court*. They are juxtaposed to the hardly serious warning



of 4 ("Beware of Cynthia's wrath, my dear Bassus!") or the hardly weighty threats of 5 ("You don't know what Cynthia can do to you, friend Gallus!"). All are about the *servitium amoris* but approach it from different angles and in very different words. Which of them represent the real Propertius?

The answer lies in the difference between his man-to-man, knowing, and humorous advice to Bassus and Gallus on the one hand; and, on the other, his continuing "dialogue" with Cynthia that is also, in its way, humorous or at least not to be taken with anything like literal seriousness. Cynthia's rage in 4 and cruelty in 5 are "archly" exaggerated. The poet's conventional reaction to the storm (almost like Aeneas' bewailing his lack of a proper death at Troy) and to her anger (almost like Gallus carving Lycoris' name on the solitary trees) are exaggerated too but they are exaggerated *to her*. Neither Bassus, Gallus, nor Cynthia herself is unsophisticated about the *servitium amoris*, but the smile Propertius shares only with her is definitely more tender than that which he shares with his critical companions.

5. Poems 6-14 form the sequence set forth above (Table 1). Their meaning as a sequence is reasonably clear and can be described briefly. Propertius is defending his ideal of love (the ideal represented by the Cynthia affair) against the criticism of the three friends — Tullus, Ponticus, and Gallus.

With Tullus (6, 14) he is defending his *nequitia*, and the *amor* that necessitates it, against the claims of educational travel, a political career, or money. Tullus is an opulent budding statesman (he bids fair to surpass his consular uncle) who gives Propertius respectable advice that Propertius resolutely rejects:

- 6.19      Tu patruī meritas conare anteire secures . . .  
25        me sine, quem semper voluit fortuna iacere,  
            hanc animam extremae reddere nequitiae.

In 6 he is on the defensive though only so to speak *pro forma*. Tullus has asked him to tour Athens and the East in his company but Propertius cannot endure the complaints of a bereft Cynthia for even an hour! He is doomed to live and die under the banner of love. Not for him sight-seeing, war, or wealth. His service of Cynthia, however, is a hard life that Tullus, that servant of empire (*accepti pars imperii*), can think of sometimes in the intervals of his travels. In 14 Propertius states his opposition to Tullus more particularly. Tullus may bask in the luxury of his wealthy Tiberine villa, but such wealth cannot vie with Love. No

riches can compensate for an adverse love affair nor add to a successful one. The implication is not exactly that Tullus has failed in love despite his income, but that Tullus has no knowledge of *Amor* and hence no true valuation of wealth (14.7):

Non tamen ista [i.e. the glories of Tullus' villa] meo  
valeant contendere amori.

Ponticus represents another rival of Propertius' *amor* though this time of the poetry that is *amor*'s expression. 7 and 9 are much more sharply opposed than 6 and 14. In 7 Ponticus is represented as writing a pretentious epic, a *Thebais*, while Propertius still serves his *dolor*, performs his service of love. But lovers for this very reason are sure to read him, while Ponticus — if he should fall to Cupid's arrow — will vainly try for the soft verse (*mollem versum*) that can express his emotion. In that case he will indeed admire Propertius and acknowledge his superiority. The clear implication of this poem is that Propertius' poetry is genuine as Ponticus' is not. The one is the result only of *ingenium*, the other of actual feeling (7.7-10):

nec tantum *ingenio*, quantum servire *dolori*  
cogor et aetatis tempora dura queri.  
hic mihi coneritur vitae modus, haec mea fama est,  
hinc cupio nomen carminis ire mei.

This hypothetical prophecy he made good in 9. Propertius can now properly say: "I told you so" (*Dicebam tibi venturos, irrisor, amores*). Ponticus' superiority is now deflated: he loves and cannot write of his love in the heavy rhythms of epic. And he is in worse case than he knows. The fact that his beloved is responsive should not deceive him: love is not really evident until it has reached the bone. The only right thing for Ponticus to do is to acknowledge his error; such confession can often lighten the burden.

But the real triumph of Propertius is over Gallus, for Gallus represented not a political or literary alternative to love but a different ideal of love itself. Gallus clearly had tried to play the field, to cultivate a host of *vulgares amores*, to achieve a constant novelty of amatory experience. He had no idea of the true *servitium* to one inexorable mistress. Propertius had warned him in 5 when he had tried to approach Cynthia. Now he has a Cynthia of his own, and Propertius will not reciprocate Gallus' scorn of the past: he only hopes Gallus' new girl will remain faithful. 10 and 13 describe the same scene.<sup>23</sup> Propertius is the *con-*

*fidant*, the *voyeur* witnessing the happy consummation. For this privilege he is grateful and will compensate by keeping the secret and instructing Gallus with his own knowledge: Cynthia has taught him all that is necessary.

Here, then, we find not only a justification of Propertius' position by the "fall" of his superior friend but a realization of Propertius' own love-ideal in another and hence "objective" form. He sees in Gallus the same symptoms and feelings he finds in himself. Gallus' girl is another Cynthia. As a *voyeur*, a friend privy to the *amour*, he has direct experience of its meaning. Here we cannot but ask: how is this possible? What does Propertius see that distinguishes this love from the formerly promiscuous loving of his friend?

The *topos*, or motif — that of the *voyeur* or more or less salacious witness — is not at all unusual. Paulus Silentiarius (*Anth. Pal.* V 255) describes how he saw two lovers linked in an all but indissoluble embrace. They had even exchanged garments (his for hers, hers for his) in their amorous desire to merge their identities. The author-witness blesses the sight — *τρὶς μάκαρ ὅς τοίοισι, φιλή, δεσμοῖσιν ἐλίχθη* — and regrets that he and his love must burn in anguished separation. A more banal form of the same motif is another epigram of Silentiarius (*Anth. Pal.* V 286) where the mutual passion is described as enough to make the lovers careless of any witness: the chains of Hephaestus are just what they want. There is also the more immediately relevant *Acme and Septimius* (45) of Catullus where the love is far less physical and the rather delicate restraint of the lovers reflects a truly mutual devotion. But in none of these is the *fides* of the witness mentioned at all. It is the special relation of Propertius to Gallus (Propertius' ability to compare past and present phases of their friendship) that changes the whole character of the scene. Propertius sees that this is a quite new kind of love for Gallus, that his attitude toward love has wholly changed. The passion is physical but it, like that of Acme and Septimius, is passionate enough to last, to enslave Gallus to his new beauty.

10.10      tantus in alternis vocibus ardor erat

13.15      vidi ego te tuto vinctum languescere collo

13.20      tantus erat demens inter utrosque furor

One day has surpassed anything that all past lovers could do:

13.25      una dies omnis potuit praecurrere amantis

This is the authentic passion, the passion of Septimius for Acme, of Catullus for Lesbia, and of Propertius for Cynthia. Here the dialogue becomes true drama.

But though Propertius "wins," so to speak, in his contest with Tullus, Ponticus, and Gallus, and proves his superiority to the conventions of the ambitious careerist, the man of letters, and the gay worldling, he still remains enslaved, caught between hope and despair. Cynthia is about to leave, to brave the seas or snows on some amatory adventure or other (8*A*), then, unexpectedly, decides to stay (8*B*). His poetical merits have obviously defeated the wealth of his rival:

10.39      hanc ego non auro, non Indis flectere conchis  
sed potui blandi carminis obsequio.

In the corresponding poems, 11 and 12, Cynthia is at Baiae, the beach resort: in 11 she is not yet lost to him, only in danger: *ut solet amoto labi custode puella / non quia perspecta non est mihi cognita fama / sed quod in hac omnis parte timetur amor*; but in 12 the worst has happened: *quantus in exiguo tempore fugit amor*! All he can do is to reiterate once more his devotion in defeat: *Cynthia prima fuit, Cynthia finis erit*, which re-echoes, but not quite in the same key, the proud boast of the corresponding 8*B*: *ista meam norit gloria* [i.e. the glory of possessing Cynthia] *canitiem*.

There is a marked difference between the monitory poems (6, 7, 9, 10, 13, 14) and the "Cynthia poems" (8*A*, 8*B*, 11, 12) of this middle section (6-14). But though the contrast of 7, 9, with 8*A*, 8*B*, is very like that of 4, 5 with 17, 18, this is not true of the relation of 10, 13 to 11, 12. Propertius' words to Gallus are not merely hortatory or monitory as they are to Tullus and Ponticus. Similarly, the Baiae poems (11, 12) are somewhat different from the conventional threat of departure or joy at its removal in 8*A* and 8*B*. Propertius' pleas to her in 11 are not heeded, as he admits in 12. His failure thus parallels Gallus' success in 10, 13. There is in fact such specificity of time and place in the sequence 10-13 that we are almost led to assume that Propertius' night with Gallus was made possible only by Cynthia's absence at Baiae. But the "corresponding" Cynthia poems (8*A* and 11, 8*B* and 12) are also arranged to fit the pattern of the poems to Ponticus and Gallus. In 8*A* Propertius' whole *amor* is threatened. Before his friends can get in their "I told you so's" (corresponding to Propertius' "I told you so's" to Ponticus and Gallus) Cynthia changes her mind, and the poet joyfully carols the news to the world (8*B*). The fact that the poem (8*B*) is *not* addressed to Cynthia but refers to her only in the third person is clearly



due to its apologetic purpose. Similarly with *II*, *12*: in *II*, the poet tries to warn Cynthia against the temptations of Baiae; by *12* his friends are aware of her unfaithfulness there, and Propertius can only reject their reproaches (and the even more stupid reproach of Roman society that he was still carrying on *at Rome* with the faithless absentee Cynthia). He boldly admits the facts and proclaims his unbroken *fides* (*Cynthia finis erit*). Here, too, there is no direct invocation of Cynthia, no "dialogue," but only a general and quasi-public explanation: the addressee is *Roma, conscia Roma*.<sup>24</sup> So, though in a different way, Propertius too is caught out in his boast or triumph of *8B*. Yet this very defeat becomes his justification. He admits the situation and glories in it while the others are simply abashed.

Thus we cannot escape the public or extroverted character of *8B* and *12*. In these poems Propertius is maintaining his amatory *pose* or *rôle* before an audience. *10* and *13*, however, are unique (quite unlike 7 and 9) in that they unite the monitory, or outer-directed, function of the poems to Tullus and Ponticus or, as we have just seen, of *8B* and *12*, with the inner "dialogue" of the poems addressed to Cynthia (*8A*, *II*, 2, *15*, *17*, *18*, *19*). In *10* and *13* he shares an experience with Gallus that changes their whole relationship: the address-form becomes dramatic and takes on much of the character and intimacy of the dialogue with Cynthia. Gallus now shares Propertius' feelings (and *vice versa*) as he had not before and as, certainly, neither Tullus nor Ponticus had or could. Yet the new girl of Gallus remains quite obscure. We only know that she is as different from the "others" as is Cynthia herself. Gallus is represented as a convert to an ideal of love rather than as the actual lover of a concrete and specific girl. The intricate counterpoint that involves the lovers and the friends in 6-14 is still based on a conventional theme or "ideal." They all justify a rôle, a public and literary *stance*, so to speak. The addressee is not just Cynthia or even Gallus, Ponticus, or Tullus, but Rome itself.

#### IV

It is clear, then, that we cannot take Propertius' love as the reality, the genuine *dolor* or, alternatively, *gloria*, that "shows up" the false conventions of Tullus, Ponticus, and Gallus. It is a convention, too. The love that Cynthia has "taught" him and that makes him so superior to the brash but chastened Gallus, the conceited Ponticus, or the priggish Tullus, is itself a patchwork of conventional attitudes held

together by the curious theory of the *servitium amoris*. Propertius does not, like Catullus, give us a biographical sequence of events and moods — the early period of successful love, the discovery of faithlessness and deceit, the loss of respect, the actual hatred as passion still persists, the final bitter end. Rather, each scene or mood, each aspect of Propertius' *amour*, is but one element in a quite static whole, an ensemble of de-temporalized motifs and episodes. This is why they can be so contrapuntally arranged, so neatly set against each other — the departure of the girl against her refusal to depart (8*A* and 8*B*); the fear of betrayal against the realization of it (11 and 12); bitter disillusion against happy acquiescence (1 and 19); blandishment against resigned acceptance (2 and 15); his own neglect against her unfaithfulness (3 and 16); external attempts to separate the lovers against the separations that are their own doing (4, 5, 17, 18). It is all what the true lover must endure. Whatever happens, he will be faithful, for it is his destiny to be the slave of love (11, 13.36):

unius hic quondam servus Amoris erat.

Yet it remains true that the other conventions or ideals — those represented by Tullus, Ponticus, and Gallus — are shown to be inferior, prideful, and wrongly egoistic, factitious (mere *ingenium*) rather than real emotion (*dolor*), lacking the spark that makes life a truly livable thing: *quae [Cynthia] mihi dum placata aderit, non ulla verebor regna. . .*. The center of the *Monobiblos* (6–14) is really a comparison of false and genuine *amores*: that Tullus' wealth is savorless, Ponticus' hexameters useless, and Gallus' boastful promiscuity an illusion that disintegrates at the touch of genuine passion, are the proofs of Propertius' essential rightness as both man and poet. He alone knows what life is, knows how to distinguish the genuine from the false.

The problem is that he does not take his own rôle seriously. It, too, is a convention and he knows it. The irony with which he treats it has come out at many points in this discussion. The irony's connection with or, rather, dependence on, the implicit "dialogue" of the Cynthia poems is the essential thing to note. This is particularly apparent in the first and last (the programmatic) poems, 1 and 19. In 19, as we may recall, he starts by painting a sentimental (and scarcely realistic or passionate) picture of Cynthia (which is also of course directed *to* her). It is not his death but her indifference to his death that he professes to dread. As for himself, no fabulous beauty of Hades could ever quench his eternal devotion to her. Yet he is afraid that some rival love (*iniquus amor*) will make her scant or leave off the desiderated, funereal tears.

Therefore, he concludes, let us love while we can, while we are alive (19.25-26):

quare dum licet inter nos laetemur amantes  
non satis est ullo tempore longus amor.

The playfulness or amused ingenuity with which he leads up to the familiar idea of "love while you can," — love as the brief flower no sooner blown than blasted, is, I think, characteristic of his poetical method. Catullus had expressed the idea with absolute simplicity in 5.1, 4-7:

Vivamus, mea Lesbia, atque amemus . . .

Soles occidere et redire possunt:  
nobis cum semel occidit brevis lax  
nox est perpetua una dormienda.  
da mi basia mille . . .

The same notion was put with a certain irony in Marvel's verses "to his coy mistress":

But at my back I always hear  
Time's winged chariot hurrying near.  
. . . . .

The grave's a fine and private place  
But none I think do there embrace.

But in 19 Propertius seems deliberately to deflate the love-death *topos*. After building up the sentimental picture (Cynthia's tears on his ashes) throughout the bulk of the poem (lines 1-20), he proceeds to tear it down. He knows that Cynthia cannot be trusted to perform the "act" designed for her (lines 21-23):

quam vereor ne te contempto, Cynthia, busto  
abstrahat a nostro pulvere iniquus Amor,  
cogat et *invitam* lacrimas siccare cadentis!

But this deprecation of her devotion is softened and lightly passed off: she has a good heart; if she does dry her tears, she'll do it unwillingly. After all he does not want to be hard on her and she is present; he is talking to her. He knows that she knows that he knows her too well to sentimentalize her behavior. The only thing to do is to accept her as she is and love while he can:

non satis est ullo tempore longus amor.

Suddenly this remarkable line strikes a note of seriousness and concrete emotion: at no time is love long enough! There is no possibility of

equating love and time or of redeeming the past by memory. The present is inexorable and it is all the time there is. The implicit dialogue (*quam vereor ne te, Cynthia . . .*) has revealed the truth — the mixture of pretence, playfulness, and sincere emotion that underlies the conventional sentiment. It is the fact of their present togetherness that finally counts.

It is by such irony that Propertius approaches seriousness. Allen,<sup>25</sup> I think, has pointed to something true about our reaction to the poems when he says that Propertius' excellence consists "in his lively personal realization of convention." What he writes is conventional; yet we feel in it, as Allen says, an effect of "personal immediacy." But we cannot, surely, rest at all happily on such an observation. It is not just that Propertius galvanizes his conventions into life by tricks of language or style.<sup>26</sup> It is the almost deliberate ambiguity of his irony that gives him immediacy or, as I should prefer to put it, poetical seriousness. On one level Propertius plays a conventional rôle like the different but similarly conventional rôles of Tullus, Ponticus, and Gallus. Yet on another level he intimates that neither he nor Cynthia can possibly take this rôle seriously. Nevertheless, in their very understanding of each other's irony there is a glimpse of deeper solidarity.

The feeling that is serious, that is not conventional, may be put into words (though it cannot, of course, be simply verbalized) as the feeling of *love's intensity*. Though love may make one miserable, it alone can make one happy; without it there are no other true values:

11.23      tu mihi sola domus, tu, Cynthia sola parentes  
                 omnia tu nostrae tempora laetitiae.

What Propertius ironically represented to Gallus as sheer *servitium* (*tum grave servitium nostrae cogere puellae discere*, 5.19) is later (when Gallus himself experiences the amatory intensity) admitted to be the only felicity:

10.29      is poterit *felix* una remanere puella  
                 qui numquam *vacuo pectore* liber erit.

The conventional lament of 1.33-34:

                 in me nostra Ve us noctes exercet amaras,  
                 et nullo *vacuus* tempore defit Amor

is, as it were, exorcised. Emptiness (*vacuitas*) has thus two senses: surcease of pain (1) and the staleness that is surcease of love (2). The merely conventional *servitium amoris* can be transferred because it lacks



the intensity of what is genuine and self-authenticating and is therefore fated and obligatory (12.18-20):

sunt quoque *translato* gaudia *servitio*.  
mi neque amare aliam neque ab hac desistere *fas est*:  
Cynthia prima fuit, Cynthia finis erit.

The difference between the conventional-literary and the real is, perhaps, to be seen most clearly in Propertius' use of mythology. When he compares his "labors" to those of Milanion (1) or Cynthia to the devoted heroines of legend (2, 15) or Gallus' love to the famed amours of Neptune and Hercules (13), he is also negating or ironically undercutting the comparison: Milanion's technique could not help him; Cynthia is no Phoebe or Calypso; Gallus, in no sense like his divine predecessors. All these stand for the copybook or literary side of love just because they are so bookish and formal. On the other hand, if the sleeping Cynthia really seems an Ariadne or Andromeda, it is because these particular legends suggest a much warmer picture (3.7-8)

*talis* visa mihi mollem spirare quietem  
Cynthia non certis nixa caput manibus.

There is nothing here of Catullus' attempt to compare the double theme of Lesbia and his brother's death with love and death in the Laodamia-Protesilaus story (68). The direct juxtaposition of mythology to actual life is avoided, for Propertius fits his myths, in the first instance, to the Gallan conventions — not to realities. There is always an ironic sense of their artificiality and the artificiality of the amatory-literary pattern they are designed to adorn. Propertius and Cynthia are, as it were, in the joke but they know also that their love (its true intensity) is much more than the joke. Their sharing this smile, so to speak, is part of their solidarity (15.23-24)

quarum [the mythological heroines] nulla  
tuos potuit convertere mores  
*tu quoque* uti fieres *nobilis historia*

The *tu* here, the direct appeal to Cynthia, has a force that it quite lacks in Tibullus and that rings with a truly Catullan tonality.<sup>27</sup>

And it is, in the last analysis, the "dialogue" (the address to Cynthia that implies her participation in the drama with him) that conveys both the irony and the serious feeling (the intensity) of the poet. In Tibullus the address-form is merely nominal or superficial: his poems are basically monologues. In Catullus the address-form is passionate without real or developed dialogue. But in Propertius the Catullan *ego* and

*tu* become dramatic with each *dramatis persona* playing a predetermined or conventional rôle, yet still retaining the capacity to stand outside the rôle and appreciate the obvious disparity between the person they enact and the person that each really is. This disparity or incongruity depends very largely on the "counterpoint," or system of symmetrical cross-references, established by the whole *Monobiblos*. It is only in such a setting that admonitions, "dialogues," and descriptions (3, 16) can come alive and stand against each other in a sort of polyphonic irony out of which a serious note, a sense of intensity, will sometimes emerge.

The real Cynthia, I take it, was a rather sophisticated *libertina*, the mistress of a number of men (sometimes rivals), who had also many talents, a piquant temperament (her anger was sharp and easily roused and her love-making was passionate), and, at bottom, a capacity for serious devotion to one man. Propertius took her for what she was (he expected neither complete monopoly nor complete good faith) but he also appreciated her temperament and reciprocated her devotion. That she became the *Lesbia* or *Lycoris* of his elegies was in a sense an ironical tribute to his real affection for her. This, I think, is something like the picture that emerges from the more realistic Cynthia-poems of Book IV (7 and 8). There is a specificity of concrete detail about these poems, as in 7.15-20 —

iamne tibi exciderant uigilacis furta Suburae  
 et mea nocturnis trita fenestra dolis?  
 per quam demisso quotiens tibi fune pependi,  
 alterna ueniens in tua colla manu!  
 saepe Venus triuio commissa est, pectore mixto  
 fecerunt tepidas pallia nostra uias—

or in the description of her spectacular entrance at the garden party (8.51) —

nec mora, cum totas resupinat Cynthia ualuas,  
 non operosa comis, sed furibunda decens.  
 pocula mi digitos inter cecidere remissos,  
 palluerantque ipso labra soluta mero.  
 fulminat illa oculis et quantum femina saeuit,  
 spectaculum capta nec minus urbe fuit.  
 Phyllidos iratos in uultum conicit unguis:  
 territa uicinas Teia clamat aquas.  
 lumina sopitos turbant elata Quiritis,  
 omnis et insana semita nocte sonat

that reveals the truth that we do not find in the conventional scenes of the *Monobiblos* (e.g. 3 or 16). But I am not pretending that these

"realistic" poems are the equals of those of the *Monobiblos*. They lack, by their very nature, the ambiguity and irony of the latter. Yet they are valuable for the interpretation of the *Monobiblos* in that they give us a glimpse of the reality behind the convention, of what the *Monobiblos* reveals only by its irony.

It is perhaps worthwhile to conclude by a few *obiter dicta* (for which there is some support, if not "proof," in the body of this essay) on the relative standing of Propertius among elegists. The difference between Propertius and Catullus is essentially the difference between one who was writing within a literary convention and one who was not. This is why we do not find Propertian irony in Catullus. He did not have to steal, as it were, upon his feelings through a series of conceits and elaborate mythical similes. The way in which Propertius differed from Gallus and Tibullus is much more difficult to define. Despite our ignorance of Gallus' four books of elegies, their conventional character is or ought to be clear. For this we have Virgil and we have Propertius himself (II.34.91):

et modo formosa quam multa Lycoride Gallus  
mortuus inferna vulnera lavit aqua!

The "love wounds" were obviously exposed with a good deal of literary éclat. Yet it seems extremely unlikely that Gallus could have maintained any ironical "distance" from the conventions that he did so much to impose on the genre of which he was, in a sense, the inventor. At least one generation had to pass before this could be done. It is also difficult to see much irony in Tibullus. At times he does appear to reflect a sort of reality. I at least am inclined to believe that such splendid lines as I.3.89:

tunc veniam subito, nec quisquam nuntiet ante  
sed videar caelo missus adesse tibi  
tunc mihi qualis eris longos turbata capillos  
obvia nudato, Delia, curre pede

have some basis in actual experience. But it is hard to disentangle the convention from the reality in the smooth amalgam of Tibullus' elegies. There is certainly nothing like the Propertian irony or ambiguity, as is shown by the absence of "dialogue" in the sense we have given to the word above. His rather rare mythological similes have no salience or bite, show no sense of incongruity or even any self-consciousness. The Gallan costume sits easily on Tibullus. Ovid was quite another story. In his *Amores*, the amatory conventions are sub-

jected to burlesque, not irony. Corinna is a fiction: the stock motifs are made into a comedy that approximates farce. Only Propertius preserved the nice ambiguity in which humor and seriousness, irony and convention, could elusively mingle.

What I have written here is, of course, only very tentative criticism or analysis. I have not meant to exaggerate the importance of the symmetry or of the "plan" to which Otto Skutsch has called our attention. It does, however, help us to understand what I may call the "contrapuntal" irony of Propertius, the way in which he played with the conventional motifs of Gallan elegy. The *Monobiblos* is a work of art based on a major theme (the *servitium amoris* or Gallus' combination of Catullus with the Hellenistic *sermo amatorius*) most intricately worked out in symmetrical contrasts and similarities. But it is also detached from its theme by a highly controlled yet effective irony which is, to some degree at least, the vehicle of deeper and more serious feeling. I shall not attempt to assess the value or "significance" of such poetry. Suffice it to say that it is unique poetry that still exerts a unique fascination.

## NOTES

1. This is not the place to describe the course of Propertian scholarship and criticism. In general, Georg Luck is right when he says (*Die römische Liebeselegie* [1961] 237): "Eine wirklich befriedigende Gesamtdarstellung des Dichters in Buchform gibt es nicht." R. Helm (s.v. Propertius, *RE*) is helpful. I have been particularly influenced by Archibald W. Allen, "Sunt qui Propertium malint," in *Critical Essays on Roman Literature*, ed. J. P. Sullivan (1962). Vittorio d'Agostino, "Nuova Bibliografia Properziana" (*Rivista di Studi Classici* 2 [1954] 35-50), deals mostly with Italian works. Of these Luigi Alfonsi, *L'Elegia di Propertio* (1945), seems to me by far the most significant.

2. The problems (both of text and arrangement) of Book II still seem insuperable. See on this P. W. Damon and W. C. Helmbold, "The Structure of Propertius, Book 2" (*Univ. Cal. Pub. Class. Phil.* 14 [1950-52] 215-53). Books III and IV are not primarily concerned with Cynthia. It is, however, important to bear in mind that the *Monobiblos* is here considered in and by itself (save for the brief reference to IV.7 and 8 near the end of this article).

3. Otto Skutsch, "The Structure of the Propertian *Monobiblos*," *CP* 58 (October 1963) 238-39.

4. On the date of the *Monobiblos* cf. Butler and Barber, *The Elegies of Propertius* (1933) p. xxv, and P. J. Enk, *Sex. Propertii Elegiarum Liber I*, Pars Prior, pp. 16-19. Both agree on 29 or 28 B.C. This almost certainly puts it before the publication of Tibullus' first book (that must be after Messalla's triumph of September 25 in 27 B.C. referred to in I.7). Thus the *Monobiblos* can properly be considered the direct successor of Gallus' four books of elegies. In II.34.85ff Propertius mentions Terentius Varro, Catullus, Calvus, and Gallus only as his



predecessors. The exact meaning of *primus ego ingredior puro de fonte sacerdos Italia per Graios orgia ferre choros* is not entirely clear. In any event, the *Mono-biblos* seems the direct successor of Gallus' amatory elegies.

5. We know little enough of Calvus' poems. His poem to his dead wife Quintilia (Propertius II.34.90: *miserae funera Quintiliae*) is the only *elegy* of his of which we can be certain. As for Varro (of Atax), we know of poems to his "flame," Leucadia, though it is uncertain whether these really preceded those of Gallus (the order of mention in Propertius II.34 is Varro, Catullus, Calvus, Gallus). Valerius Cato's *Lydia* seems to have been an amatory poem but it could hardly have been a series of elegies like the books of Gallus and Propertius. Whether it is or is not identical with the *Dirae* of the Vergilian Appendix, it may well have been like it.

6. Brooks Otis, *Virgil, A Study in Civilized Poetry* (Oxford, 1964) 102-5.

7. References are to Hezel, *Catull und das Griechische Epigram* (Tübingen Beiträge, 1932) and O. Weinreich, *Die Distichen des Catull* (1926).

8. On the vexed problem of the "origin" of Latin amatory elegy see the excellent and condensed discussions in Butler and Barber (above, n.4) xxxvii-lxvi, and Enk (above, n.4) 1.29-40. A. A. Day, *The Origin of the Latin Love-Elegy* (1938) gives all the facts but is sparse on conclusions. Georg Luck (above, n.1) is suggestive but also elliptical in his discussion of the problem. Perhaps the most helpful single essay on the *Roman* character of the Latin Love-Elegy is that of Erich Burck, "Römische Wesenszüge der Augusteischen Liebeselegie" (*Hermes* 80 [1952] 163-200) to which should be added Frank O. Copley's "Servitium Amoris in the Roman Elegists" (*TAPA* 78 [1947] 285-300). Burck made the point that, to the Greek, love was a special activity, normally of youth, ending either in marriage or the dissolution of the "anomalous" attachment. It was not, as with Catullus and the neoterics, taken seriously as a "life" or "value" to be opposed to the usual norms of private or public life. The characteristic traits of this new conception of love are to Burck: the *exclusiveness* (absolute dominance of all other concerns) of the love-attachment; the loyalty (*fides*), constancy (*constantia*), and chastity (*pudicitia*, *castitas*) expected of the lovers, even though they are clearly not united by marriage or any legal or *respectable* tie; the cruelty and severity of the lover's mistress (*domina*) and his *passive* endurance of it; the union also of reflections on death with the love sentiment; the fact that the lover feels his love as a *fate* and his love-poetry also as his fated form of expression. Copley deals more particularly with the *servitium amoris*: the Greek "god-slave *exemplum*" (the god as the slave of some mortal, as Apollo of Admetus) is used very differently by the Roman elegists (the abasement, the emotional humiliation, of the god is stressed) and the vastly expanded conception of the lover's "slavery" to his girl is wholly Roman. Copley says flatly: "There is extant no evidence to show that Greek literature had any part to play in the interpretation given by the Roman elegists to the god-slave *exemplum* or to the lover's humble abasement" (p. 298). I feel that Burck and Copley are basically correct in their analyses but give a rather false impression of ethnic (Greek vs. Roman) differences when they are really dealing with a most specific phenomenon. Surely the conception of love as a career of slavery to a harsh mistress, a career in which the *fides* of the lover is able to endure the worst caprices of his beloved, a career which is at once torment, felicity, and proud endurance, owes its origin to the very specific experience of Catullus (we can only guess as to other neoterics like Varro or Calvus). Where

Catullus' love differed from that of Gallus and the other elegists was that he embraced his as a *fact*, a tremendous personal experience (*fieri sentio et excrucior*) and they regarded theirs as a necessary career (*he* wanted to get rid of his burden of hate and love; *they* almost cherished it as a literary and personal value — to be preferred to all others). This is why their "love" was so much more receptive of the conventional motives and attitudes of comedy and epigram: the bitterness of exclusion by a locked door, fear of the rich rival, condemnation of luxurious attire, and so on. This was the game, the career, they had chosen. But the Greek lover had no "value" or "career" he was pursuing: he only wanted to possess or (in comedy) marry the girl and was willing to suffer a good deal to that end. Sometimes his (or her) love was frustrated or pathologically misdirected and amounted to a disease (*róσος*) but it was never an ideal or career *per se*. The lover never sentimentalized his frustration. He had Catullus' sexual passion without his *pietas* and *fides* and he had something of Gallus' or Propertius' endurance without their idealization of it. Once these differentiations are clearly drawn, there is no great mystery to the "origin" of Augustan amatory elegy. It is the Catullan *amour* conventionalized and expanded by a much more copious use of Greek motifs. Of course it remains true that if Catullus had not been a *Roman*, he would probably never have written (or perhaps felt) as he did. Nevertheless the "origin" of Augustan amatory elegy was surely *specific* and most probably Catullan. As for the rôle of Gallus, the evidence seems fairly conclusive: he first added the conventional element that we can clearly discern in the *amour* described in *Eclogue* 10 (where Virgil is obviously referring to his Lycoris elegies). He also first raised the elegiac *paignia* or *nugae* (mostly of epigrammatic length) of Catullus to the proportions of *books* of relatively long elegies. Here his main inspirations were undoubtedly Callimachus and Euphron — perhaps also Parthenius — that is, they gave him the idea of writing a *collection of elegies* with a definite literary purpose; they did not determine their essential amatory *content*. The idea of writing carefully planned *libelli* of poems (usually in one meter; often arranged on a more or less intricate symmetrical pattern) seems Augustan and is obviously different from the mixture of elegies and lyric *polymetra* (possibly also hexameters) that we find in Catullus' *libellus*. The ancient evidence (all collected in Schanz-Hosius, *Geschichte der römischen Literatur* II, 170–72) points unequivocally to Gallus (not simply to Varro or Calvus any more than to Catullus himself) as the innovator here.

9. Georg Luck (above n.1) 48–49.

10. Above, n.3. I follow Skutsch's titles for the poems in Table 1 (elsewhere the titles are my own).

11. Skutsch makes 89 distichs for poems 1–5 because he posits, after Housman, a missing distich after 1.11. I see no good reason for this. Thus, the totals for 1–5 and 15–20 are 88+88 distichs or 176+176 lines. The important point, of course, is the agreement, or equality, of the number of distichs. His figures for 6–9 (71 distichs) and 10–14 (70 distichs) are correct.

12. Skutsch was not the first to notice the "correspondence" of poems. Cf. W. A. Carnps (*Propertius' Elegies Book I* [1961] 10–11), who, however, does not attempt to work out the significance of the correspondence. My divisions, or "stanzas," are not of course impervious to criticism, but I have tried to follow the sense where it led me in each separate poem and have eschewed general principles of division, like Damon and Helmbold's quatrain theory. Damon and Helmbold (above, n.2), however, assume (p. 222) that Propertius only began to



compose in quatrains (groups of four lines or two distichs) after writing Book I, or, in other words, after coming into the Maecenas circle (where, according to them, the Latin theory of strophic structure first appeared). My reasons for the divisions, or "stanzas," can be stated summarily here:

Poem 1: an 8-8-8-8-6 pattern The Cynthia (1-8) and Milanion (9-16) stanzas are quite clear-cut. Lines 17-24 deal (after a brief transition) with the magicians. The *et vos* of line 25 introduces a new set of advisors and the Catullan theme of flight from Cynthia. Line 34 (*in me*) marks his return to his own plight and his (therefore) despairing last word to all in similar plight. Poem 2: lines 1-8 introduce the central theme (Cynthia's perverse self-adornment); lines 9-24 contain a series of natural and mythological similes. There is a transition from nature to mythology after line 14 but the whole series of comparisons performs a similar function. The last 8 lines obviously return to Cynthia and himself. Poem 15 follows the same pattern: 8 lines of introduction; an unbroken series of mythological comparisons up to line 24; an 8-line return to Cynthia and himself. The extra 10 lines (33-42) obviously mark a change: the perjury theme of lines 25-28 is continued but only *after* the reassurance of lines 29-32.

Poem 3 falls into four unmistakable 10-line stanzas: the mythological similes (1); the lover's temptation resisted (2); the lover's anxious vigil over the sleeping Cynthia, the only stanza where the "you-form" is used when Cynthia is directly addressed even though asleep (3); the moon and her awakening (4): here the stanza that begins line 31 starts with a *donec* but it obviously marks a crucial transition — she slept *till* the moon, etc. Her first words do not break the stanza but end it with the natural reproaches that her lover expects. Her own 6-line account of the night she has passed (41-46) appropriately ends the episode (this is *her* night as opposed to that of Propertius). Poem 4: the first 10-line stanza describes the famous girls that Bassus cites against Cynthia and Cynthia's superiority to them all. The next four lines (11-14) state the special charms of Cynthia; the next ten (15-24) deal with Cynthia's putative vengeance on Bassus; the last four (25-28) sum up and express the poet's agreement with Cynthia's mood. Poem 17 exactly reproduces this arrangement: lines 1-10 deal with the storm-tossed poet and his plight; 11-14 appeal to Cynthia and express the poet's change of heart; 15-24 describe his putative loss of Cynthia's compassionate presence at his funeral; lines 25-28 end the poem with a prayer to the sea-nymphs for a safe escape. Poem 5 shows a clear 10-12-10 pattern. Lines 1-10 expostulate with Gallus for his rash intrusion; lines 11-22 describe the *servitium* that Gallus proposes to incur; lines 23-32 emphasize his helplessness: no noble ancestors, not Propertius himself, can provide him with any *medicina mali*. Poem 18 has the same structure: lines 1-10 describe Propertius' solitude and estrangement from Cynthia; lines 11-22 offer his defense: he is not to blame as she thinks; lines 23-32 expound the nature of his *fides*: her injuries have made him expose his woes only to the uncommunicative birds and wilderness.

The only poems in these groups (1-5, 15-19) whose strophic arrangements do not correspond in the pattern are 1, 19, and 3, 16. The much shorter 19 has the strophic arrangement: 10-8-8 (the divisions are so clear they need no particular defense), whereas 1 (as we have seen) is: 8-8-8-8-6. Yet the connection between the two poems is certain: the intentional echo of 19.26 by 1.34 (or *vice versa*) is unmistakable. Poem 16 (unlike 3) falls into octettes or strophes of 8 lines: Lines 1-8 contrast the door's past and present; 9-16 deal with the reproachful *carmina*

it must listen to; 17-48 give one such *carmen* in three 8-line stanzas (the physical suffering of the excluded lover; the wish to be let in; the door's obduracy). The speech is rounded off in four more lines (41-44) that revert to the lover's *carmina*: with these (*haec ille*) the door returns to its bitter exasperation of stanza 2 (the whole, 41-48, makes a coherent final stanza). The non-correspondence of strophes here (between 3 and 16) is doubtless due to the difference in situation: the long complaint of the *exclusus amator* naturally falls into shorter strophes than the much more dramatically structured 3. Also, 3 and 16 (cf. Skutsch) both have a high proportion of long word endings in the pentameters and hence may be older than the other poems of the *Monobiblos* (except 15).

I would not be prepared to insist on every detail of these divisions or strophes. Nevertheless, they surely do reveal a system of correspondences that is much more significant than the numerical correspondence of the totals (88 to 88). The relatively slight inequalities in the correspondence (principally between 1 and 19, 3 and 16) are what we might expect of a poet who is concerned, but still poetically concerned, with symmetry. Cf. also the chronology of 3 and 16.

13. I leave the reader to check my "stanzas" here. Those of 6 (note the beginnings of lines that mark a shift or movement of thought: *illa, an mihi, tu, me, at tu*), 14, 8A and 11, 8B and 12 seem to me quite unambiguous. There is less certainty in the division of poems 7 and 10: an 8-6-6-6 division is possible in 7 as it is in 10 (i.e. 8-6-6-6-4). But on the whole the 10-10-10 or 10-10-6 division seems preferable. The 8-10-10-6 or 8 division of 9 and 13 seems clear: in 9, *quid tibi, tum magis*, in 13, *haec erit, non sic*, obviously indicate transitions.

14. There has been some dispute about *castas odisse puellas* (line 5). On this Archibald Allen ("Elegy and the Classical Attitude toward Love: Propertius I, 1," *YCS* 11 [1950] 266-67, including note 34) seems to me quite correct: "Love has taught him to hate, and it has taught him to hate girls like Cynthia; for *castae puellae* are girls who, like Cynthia, reject a lover." It does not, as Allen insists, mean that *therefore* Catullus had to resort to easy women or prostitutes (*viles* as in II.24.9). On the other hand, there is the interpretation of Fontenrose ("Propertius and the Roman Career," *Univ. Cal. Studies Class. Phil.* 13 [1949] 373-76) and J. F. Sullivan ("Castas odisse puellas: A Reconsideration of Propertius I. i" *WS* 74 [1961] 96-112) to which Enk later ("De vero Propertii erga Cynthiae Amore," *Miscellanea Properziana* [1957] 25-30) gave his *nihil obstat*, that *castae puellae* are the truly chaste girls whom Propertius hated after he had succumbed to the dangerous charm of the *incesta* Cynthia. Sullivan argues that Propertius' love for Cynthia is a sort of *Dirnenliebe*; that her sexual impurity is itself the source of her attraction. (This type of love has been described by Freud, as Sullivan points out at some length, *ibid.* 98f.) This explanation of *castas odisse* is, however, impossible if we are to make sense of the whole poem. In order to uphold it, Sullivan has to maintain that the Milanion *exemplum* "does not preclude any earlier granting of Cynthia's favours to the poet; the difference is that Cynthia continues to maltreat him." This is obviously far-fetched. Cynthia has humbled Propertius' pride (clearly his pride in his "success" with girls); a year has gone by and the gods are still against him (again, clearly, lack of success with Cynthia). Yet he cannot win her by "labors," as Milanion won Atalanta, or by magic or occult arts. All he can do is escape as indeed all similarly tormented lovers should escape — all, that is, who lack an easy, requited love (*quibus facili deus annuit aure*). Cynthia is therefore *not* such an

easy love. Allen rightly couples the *odisse* with the *odi et amo* of Catullus. *Castae puellae* are clearly the fastidious, like Cynthia, who are anything but easy, anything but quickly responsive. In one sense neither Lesbia nor Cynthia is chaste, but they are like the chaste in their cruel refusal to accept their lovers before tormenting them. It is only such women that we can hate *and* love — not true mates or equals in an assured partnership (*in tuto semper amore pares*). There is of course (though it has not been “of course” to all Propertian scholars!) a nuance of irony in the use of *castae* here. Cynthia is formally likened to the typical *casta* who keeps her suitors waiting in agonies of frustrated attendance; in actuality the malice is much more deliberate, for the *castitatas* has little if any *pudicitia* and a great deal of sheer cruelty. The *improbis Amor* (lines 4, 6) that presses down Propertius (cf. *Aeneid* 4.412: *improbe Amor, quid non mortalia pectora cogis!* and the οἶλος ἔρωος of Apollonius, *Arg.* 3.1078) is clearly the *Amor* of *Eclogues* 8 and 10. It is indeed possible that the actual psychology of Propertius may have had points of congruity with the Freudian cases referred to by Sullivan but what he is here (in this poem) describing is a quite conventional attitude — that of the lady’s cruelty or *saevitia*, her refusal to grant her favors on request. That this view is but one side, or aspect, of his *amour* is evident from 19 (see below) where love is not a burden but a felicity that makes any time seem too short.

15. The phrase in line 31, *vos remanete*, has often been misinterpreted. Enk and Butler-Barber take it correctly as meaning “to stay behind, stay at Rome,” not to go off with Propertius.

16. References are to Walther Abel, “Die Anredeformen bei den römischen Elegikern” (diss., University of Berlin, 1930) and Hermann Tränkle, “Die Sprachkunst der Properz und die Tradition der lateinischen Dichtersprache” (*Hermes*, Einzelschriften 15, 1960). Abel’s dissertation is, beyond question, the most significant single work devoted to Propertius in the present century. Tränkle’s recent article forms a most useful supplement to it. The differences (in respect to the form of address) between Catullus, Tibullus, and Propertius have not, however, been adequately explained, especially in the context of close stylistic analysis. Such a task is quite beyond the scope of this article. Briefly, the basic *differentiae* can be stated as follows:

(a) Catullus: the second person is used in a hortatory or directly appellative sense. Catullus appeals to himself in the second person or to Lesbia, and in this sense indulges in a sort of dialogue, but the “dialogue” is naturally limited and embryonic compared to Propertius. Yet it can certainly be said that Catullus prefigures Propertius.

(b) Tibullus: the “second person” is used incidentally and briefly; the monologue character of his elegies is pronounced and obvious. Cf. here Tibullus I.1 and Tränkle’s analysis of it (above n.16) 143–44.

(c) Propertius (*Monobiblos*): the hortatory second person is raised to the rank of a true *dramatis persona* in both the Cynthia poems (esp. 2, 15, 19) and the Gallus poems (10, 13), but this usage cannot and should not be dissociated from the context of all 20 poems of the *libellus* (e.g. from the “descriptive” or “objective” 3 and 16). All three Roman poets, of course, use all three persons quite differently from the authors of the Greek anthology or similar Greek erotic verse. This is due almost entirely to the quite different contexts. The addressees or characters of the Anthology, for example, are unknowns (even the names add nothing) or generic (the reader, the generalized lover or beloved) and wholly lack the personal force of the addressees of Catullus or Propertius. For



this very reason the poems are isolated: there is no connection or context. By "dialogue" here I mean, of course, one that is more implied than actual. Abel (above, n.16) tries to trace the development of the "Dialogtechnik" after the *Monobiblos* (Books II, III, IV) but he shows clearly the volitional, dramatic character of the warnings, requests, and pleas of the *Monobiblos*. Ponticus, and particularly Gallus, are *dramatis personae* who advise Propertius, are in turn advised by him, and then shown to be the victims of his "I told you so." His relations with Cynthia are similarly dramatic: he begs her not to sail away (8A); she heeds his prayer (8B). In 19, he first begs her to remember and mourn him after his death; then expresses his fear that she will not; finally reaches the conclusion (*quare*) that they *therefore* must find their happiness in the present (*latemur*). At all points we feel her provocative presence just as we do (in a rather different way) in the expostulatory 18 or in the reciprocal 2 and 15. The one defect of Abel's keen analysis is his failure to notice the connectedness or contrapuntal "plan" of the *Monobiblos*. Without this the "dialogue" would be very much less effective.

17. Archibald W. Allen (above, n.1) 141.

18. See, for this question, the admirable dissertation of Frederick Mallet ("Quaestiones Propertianae," diss, Göttingen, 1882) esp. pp. 40-43. If we bear in mind the many parallels assembled by Mallet (esp. Charito, Callimachus *Ep.* 42 Pfeiffer) and consider also the striking differences between Propertius and Paulus, the possibility of the latter's derivation from the former seems exceedingly remote.

19. Cf. Mallet (above, n.18) 26-27, and especially the description (that he does not cite) of Lucian (*dial. deor.* 11) where the Moon tells Aphrodite of her approach to the sleeping Endymion: ὁ δὲ ὑπὸ τοῦ ὕπνου λελυμένος ἀναπνέη τὸ ἀμβρόσιον ἐκεῖνο ἄσθμα, τότε τοῖνυν ἐγὼ ἀφοφητὶ κατιοῦσα ἐπ' ἄκρων τῶν δακτυλῶν βεβηκυῖα, ὥς ἂν μὴ ἀνεγρόμενος ἐκταραχθεῖ — οἶσθα' τί οὖν ἂν σοι λέγοιμι τὰ μετὰ ταῦτα; πλὴν ἀπόλλυμαι γε ὑπὸ τοῦ ἔρωτος.

20. Of course the moon here wakes Cynthia, not the lovely Endymion. But the sentiment was transferable as Ovid (*Her.* 18.59-64) indicates:

Luna fere tremulum praebebat lumen eunti  
 ut comes in nostras officiosa vias.  
 hanc ego suspiciens, "faveas, dea candida," dixi,  
 "et subeant animo Latmia saxa tuo.  
 Non sinit Endymion te pectoris esse severi.  
 flecte, precor, vultus ad mea furta tuos."

Compare Ovid's *officiosa* with Propertius' *sedula*. Ovid had obviously read Propertius!

21. On this poem the commentators are not very helpful. Butler and Barber (above, n.4) 176, state that "there is no need to suppose any allusion to Cynthia, though doubtless the poem embodies sad experience." M. Rothstein says: "Der Dichter spricht nicht seine eigenen Empfindungen aus, sondern lässt eine andere, vielleicht nur in seiner Phantasie existierende Persönlichkeit in einer bestiumten Situation sprechen" (above, p. 96). Copley (*Exclusus Amator: A Study in Latin Love Poetry*, 1956) says bluntly: "Unlike his other elegies, it [I 16] is baldly impersonal." Friedrich Solmsen ("Three Elegies of Propertius' First Book," *CP* 57 [1962] 80), however, disagrees and takes Propertius himself to be the *exclusus amator*. He sees (rightly as I take it) that the poet wants to contrast the degraded house and mistress with the pathetic lover's plight — his

own plight. Yet I cannot see that Solmsen gains anything by grouping this poem with the other "solitude" poems (17 and 18) or that he has satisfactorily explained the setting (esp. the door as speaker). He rightly sees it is no mere imitation of Catullus 67 (Copley would explain it away as just another *diffamatio*) but he does not really get at the difference. Surely the use of the door as mouth-piece is a way of attributing the really harsh criticism of Cynthia (if it is Cynthia) to a *persona* other than that of the much too involved poet and thus of providing a pathetic setting for his own words. He leaves abuse of Cynthia to the door; for himself, he merely complains, plaintively appeals for mercy. That the speaker is Propertius is clear, once we grasp the poem's correspondence with 3. When Cynthia is ready, alone and awaiting a definitely expected Propertius, he comes too late and too drunk, after cheating her out of "her night." When Propertius is there, eager to enter, she callously locks him out. Each complaint is the mate of the other (virtuous devotion confronting cruel unfaithfulness). The counter-point is unmistakable.

22. Cf. here Solmsen (above, n.21) 78-79, 84-85. To him the "solitudes" of 17 and 18 are symbols of the poet's loneliness, not biographical facts. Cf. on this also, A. A. Allen (above, n.1) 143, who comes to much the same conclusion as Solmsen. But the "loneliness" here becomes much more significant when we take 17 and 18 with 4 and 5. When he speaks to Cynthia (when *she* is directly addressed in the continuous "dialogue" of the *Monobiblos*), he reveals the solitary aspect of his *servitium* as he does not to Bassus or Gallus. Put another way: his love for Cynthia takes place in a "private" as well as a public world.

23. I have not in the text discriminated between poems 10 and 13. They are unlike the "corresponding" 7 and 9: for whereas 7 is the prophecy and 9 the "I told you so" (cf. 7.15: "*te quoque si certo puer hic concusserit arcu*" with 9.1: "*dicebam tibi venturos, irrisor, amores*"), both 10 and 13 are "I told you so's" and answer rather the "prophecy" of poem 5. Obviously, Propertius wanted to sandwich the absence of Cynthia at Baiae (11, 12) between references to his own presence with Gallus. The first lines of 13:

Tu, quod saepe soles, nostro laetabere casu,  
Galle, quod abrepto *solus* amore vacem.

seem to re-echo lines 13-14 of 12:

nunc primum longas *solus* cognoscere noctes  
cogor et ipse meis auribus esse gravis.

Hence we seem to have the sequence:

- 10: The night with Gallus (but no mention of Cynthia's absence)
- 11: Cynthia away at Baiae (but as yet not overtly unfaithful)
- 12: Cynthia at Baiae (her unfaithfulness known)
- 13: Propertius contrasts his own kindness with Gallus' prospective delight in Cynthia's behavior at Baiae

In 10 the emphasis is on the expertise and authority of Propertius as a *magister amoris* (since *Cynthia me docuit semper*); in 13, on the fall of Gallus from his former state of insolent indifference to love like Propertius' for Cynthia. 13, in short, reflects a sensitivity to abuse (and thus a willingness to underline the "I told you so") that we do not find in the almost complacently magisterial tone of 10. The "fall" of Cynthia is what accounts for the change. Yet it is clear that we

cannot take this as simple biography or autobiography. The nuances of Propertius' "dialogue" with Gallus are still part of a symmetrical pattern.

24. Cf. the discussion of 12.2 in Enk (above n.4) II 107-8. The MS. NAFPV Vo (cf. the sigla of the Oxford text or Enk) read here:

Quid mihi desidia non cessas fingere crimen,  
quod faciat nobis conscia Roma moram

Here we can take *conscia Roma* as vocative and take *desidia* as the subject (understood) of *faciat*; or we can, with Bailey, emend *faciat* to *facias*; or we can, with Enk, make *Roma* the nominative subject of *faciat*, in which case *cessas* would refer to a friend who invites Propertius to leave Rome with him and then accuses Propertius of *desidia* with Cynthia when he refuses. All the critics, so far as I can tell, have ignored the "correspondence" of 8B and 12. In 8B Cynthia's willingness to *remain* at Rome makes Rome itself very dear to her (and inferentially to him): *illi carus ego et per me carissima Roma*. Now (12), when Rome is so disagreeable to him, the gossiping Romans accuse him of prolonging his stay there because of the *absent* Cynthia! Hence *conscia Roma* seems to be a natural enough vocative. To suppose that the subject of *cessas* is some other friend (or an anonymous reference to Bassus, Tullus, or Ponticus) hardly fits a book in which all second-person references are clearly indicated and form part of the general symmetry. It is true, however, that it is easier to take *faciat* with a nominative *Roma* as the manuscript now stands. Probably Bailey's emendation of *facias* is to be accepted as Barber does in his Oxford text. In any event, 12 is apologetic and directed to an audience critical of Propertius' affair with Cynthia.

25. A. A. Allen (above, n.1) 141.

26. On the style of Propertius see the admirable discussion in Tränkle (above, n.16), especially on Propertius' transformation of the traditional "Dichtersprache." It is a pity, however, that Tränkle did not consult Postgate's introduction (ch. 11, *Words and Style*) to his *Select Elegies* (1881). I feel, however, that the verbal style of Propertius cannot be correctly appreciated by collecting the unusual words and constructions under separate headings, but only by careful discussion of relevant passages *in situ*. Tränkle does some of this but not nearly enough. See his discussion of I.9 on pp. 12ff. The abruptness of the sequence and the harsh constructions here are not, as Tränkle rightly sees, taken from ordinary speech (the *sermo cotidianus*) but are designed by Propertius. This whole verbal aspect of Propertius has had to be ignored in the present essay for stylistic analysis would have taken far more space than I commanded. None of the commentators (Postgate is something of an exception) really supplies it.

27. I am thinking here of such poems as Catullus 70 and 72. Yet I do not mean to imply that Propertius' use of the second person is really like that of Catullus. Catullus' use of the *tu* is capricious and shifting in a quite un-Propertian way. Here also, as Abel points out, there is a decided difference between the *Monobiblos* and the later books.



## SOCRATES' CHOICE IN THE *CRITO*

BY N. A. GREENBERG

MANY readers of the *Crito* feel, I believe, that while Socrates' decision to die rather than to attempt escape is somehow correct, the political theory upon which that decision is ostensibly based is open to serious criticism.<sup>1</sup> Thus, for example, while Adkins says that "in some respects this is Plato's most interesting political theory," he comments that the "argument here justifies the execution of unjust sentences honestly arrived at; but it would also, quite legitimately on the basis of these values, justify the execution of unjust sentences cynically arrived at."<sup>2</sup> In a rather more sober treatment, Jones concludes that "he would have been an unnatural father, even in Plato's day, who would have put his son to death for flouting his wishes."<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, I know of no discussion of Socrates' decision where it is seriously argued that Socrates ought to have attempted escape. But rather than rely on the dubious argument *ex silentio*, one need appeal only to the text of Plato. The reader of Plato who comes to the *Crito* after completing the *Apology* encounters some troubling disparities. When Socrates considers the alternatives of death or exile in the *Apology*, he says that death is preferable to exile because he does not know whether death is a good or an evil, but he is certain that exile would be an evil (*Apology* 37). In the *Crito*, on the other hand, the major basis for his decision to die rather than to attempt escape is that such is the decree of the laws. These views are not necessarily inconsistent, but they surely do not strengthen each other. Given the preferential ranking of alternatives in the *Apology*, the central argument of the *Crito* would seem superfluous. Of course, it may be pointed out that the choice in the *Apology* is between death and a postulated legally imposed exile, while it is an illegal exile which is considered as an alternative in the *Crito*. This, however, in no way lessens the force of the conclusion above.

Further, the appeal to legality in the *Crito* does not sit well upon the person who says in the *Apology*:

— if you say to me, Socrates, this time we will not mind Anytus, and you shall be let off, but upon one condition, that you are not to enquire and speculate in this way any more, and that if you are caught doing so again

you shall die; — if this was the condition on which you let me go, I should reply: Men of Athens, I honor and love you; but I shall obey the god rather than you, and while I have life and strength I shall never cease from the practice and teaching of philosophy.

(*Apology* 29c5–d5)<sup>4</sup>

To be sure, this is a cry of defiance against men and not laws, and in the *Crito* (54) the laws themselves assure Socrates that he is the victim not of laws but of men. But this is still not very satisfying, for if the men of Athens had decreed that Socrates live but desist from philosophy, this would have been as much the decree of law as the unjust verdict of death which Socrates did accept as binding in the *Crito*. It would, of course, be excessively legalistic to argue that Socrates rejects the hypothetical decree on the ground that a penalty of that sort was not within the usual repertoire of an Athenian jury. Plato (and presumably Socrates too) was always aware that it is most difficult to frame a law or decree which must be obeyed under any and all conditions, and he had no hesitation in concocting such hard cases as whether or not to return a borrowed sword to a friend who has in the meantime become insane (*Republic* I 331c). Under the circumstances, we may advance the hypothesis that there is a serious discrepancy between the decision described in the *Crito* and the central grounds upon which that decision is based, a discrepancy for which an explanation is sought below.

It must be made clear that there is no attempt in what follows to solve the “Socratic problem.” The data under consideration consist solely of the *Apology* and the *Crito*, and the Socrates discussed is simply the one portrayed by Plato in those two works. It can be claimed that he is the only Socrates who counts anyway. External considerations will intrude from time to time but they are kept to a minimum. If what results is a mere exercise in literary criticism, so be it. The issues involved, life vs. death, the individual vs. the state, law vs. justice, are great enough to justify treatment on even so limited a scale. Moreover, there is no delusion here that ours is the only possible explanation of the discrepancy noted above. Accordingly, it is only fair (and it may help to forestall criticism) to lay bare some of the primary assumptions which underlie what follows.

First, it is held that the two works may be taken together and closely compared. Despite sundry hypotheses to the contrary, the *Crito* refers so frequently and massively to the *Apology* that such treatment seems justified. Again, unlike the dubious criticism which would draw conclusions about the Creon of *Antigone* from the Creon of *Oedipus Tyrannus*, there lies behind the *Apology* and *Crito* a single historical figure who

did go to trial and who did choose death. It is allowable to seek for consistency in that figure.

As a second postulate, the search for irony is severely checked. To be sure, excessive naiveté is as bad as excessive subtlety, but again it is justifiable to expect a minimum of sarcasm in a Socrates discussing his choice of death rather than life. While it may be accepted that Plato does not portray Crito as a towering intellect,<sup>5</sup> the sincerity of Socrates' arguments need not be questioned. There is no doubt that both works contain ironies which must be apparent to all. What is not accepted is the possible thesis that the arguments before the jurors and Crito are so factitious that they could not have been seriously intended.

In the third place, we reject as unsatisfactory any such summation as the following: "... and thus the gist of the *Apology* and *Crito* comes to this: 'Obey the law, and obey it cheerfully, where a material interest is at stake: otherwise you are a disobedient son and a faithless partner. Disobey it only, and disobey it even then in anguish, when a supreme spiritual question is at issue.'"<sup>6</sup> For this summation merely restates the problem at hand. When does a material issue become a spiritual question, and when does a spiritual question become supreme?

It is our fourth and major contention that light may be thrown on the discussion in the *Crito* through a simple analysis of the process of decision under conditions of uncertainty. In this way we hopefully contend that factors which are sufficiently based on the texts may be clarified, factors which are glossed over both by the summation above and by the works themselves. Complete elucidation must be postponed, but as preliminary support to the allegation that Plato and his Socrates have ignored or overlooked major relevant factors in the decision to die, we summon a major thesis of Adkins' work<sup>7</sup> that Plato continually sought to raise the "quiet" cooperative virtues to a level equal to or even higher than that of the "noisy" competitive virtues of the heroic code. The telling use of Achilles as a model in *Apology* 28 dangerously weakens efforts to attain that goal. While it does not seem particularly remote to interpret Socrates' decision to die as an heroic act, it causes considerable friction to take it largely as an act of good citizenship. It is worth noting that Plato's hands are tied in the *Apology* and *Crito* in a way that is not true of any other dialogue. Plato wrote the works but Socrates drank the hemlock. What is more, the issue of life and death is not to be dismissed as simply a "material interest." Finally, it should be noted that the attempt to formulate a case based on Plato's text which conflicts with Plato's own central claims is not so much a slur as it is a tribute to the integrity of his artistic vision.

The heroic aspect of Socrates' behavior is shown at the beginning of the *Crito*. Crito is amazed at how easily and tranquilly Socrates conducts himself in a situation which Crito considers to be a calamity (43b). Socrates replies that he is acting as any man of his years should, but Crito (and Plato) points out that most old men do not behave in this manner, and Socrates can only modestly and briefly agree: whereupon this line of thought is dropped. It should be noted that there is no appeal here to the arguments of the *Apology* to the effect that death is preferable to exile. Instead, Socrates' unusual bravery and control in the face of death are allowed to shine forth undimmed by rational argument. A few lines further, Socrates tells of his vision, of the woman, "fair and comely, clothed in bright raiment," who called and said: "The third day hence to fertile Phthia shalt thou go" (44b2). The reminiscence of Achilles is inescapable and plays its part in emphasizing Socrates' heroic stance. It is only at this point, after the mood has been established, that Crito begins the main argument of the dialogue. Crito urges Socrates to escape while there is still time. The arguments used, with the replies of Socrates, may be listed:

1. If Socrates dies, Crito will lose a friend who can never be replaced (44b7-8). This is unanswerable and it is ignored.

2. The many will despise Crito as a man who forsakes his friends (44b9-c5). Socrates' reply is typical: "But why, my dear Crito, should we care about the opinion of the many? Good men, who are more worthy of consideration, will think of these things truly as they occurred" (44c6-9).

3. The many can impose the greatest evil on any one who displeases them (44d2-5). Again the typical reply that the infliction of the greatest evil or of the greatest good, of making a man ignorant or wise, is not within the domain of the many (44d6-10).

4. Escape will not endanger Socrates' friends (44e2-45b7). Crito admits that there is a risk that the friends will suffer because of Socrates' escape, and Socrates agrees that this is a consideration (45a5-6). Nevertheless, Crito assures him that the friends have sufficient funds to bribe any one who threatens them (45a6-b5) and there is no reason at this point to doubt it. It is clear from the entire tenor of Plato's presentation that Crito's arguments in favor of escape are to be refuted in short order. They are to be revealed as the unworthy prudential considerations of the many. Socrates' decision is to be made on a higher moral plane. Since this argument is peculiar in that its denial might be used to bolster Socrates' decision to remain, it is not to be answered until after the decision is made. At 53a8-b2 it is taken as tolerably



certain that Socrates' friends would suffer exile and deprivation of citizenship or loss of property, but by then it has become a subsidiary issue. The decision to remain and die has at that point been justified on other grounds.

5. Exile will not be as bad as Socrates pictured it at the trial (45b7-c4). As with the preceding argument, this will not be denied until 53b3-e6, for it also is two-edged and can be used to justify the decision to remain. The decision is to be made on other grounds first.

6. Not to escape when he can plays into the hands of his enemies (45c5-8). This is much like the third argument and presumably would merit the same reply.

7. By not escaping, Socrates abandons his children:

“And further I should say that you are deserting your own sons; for you might bring them up and educate them; instead of which you go away and leave them, and they will have to take their chance; and if they do not meet with the usual fate of orphans, there will be small thanks to you. No man should bring children into the world who is unwilling to persevere to the end in their nurture and education.” (45c8-d5)

This is stinging indeed, and with this last most forceful argument, Crito passes into the following very interesting peroration:

“But you appear to be choosing the easier part, not the better and manlier, which would have been more becoming in one who professes to care for virtue in all his actions, like yourself. And indeed, I am ashamed not only of you, but of us who are your friends, when I reflect that the whole business will be attributed to our want of courage. The trial need never have come on, or might have been managed differently; and this last act or crowning folly will seem to have occurred through our negligence and cowardice, who might have saved you, if we had been good for anything; and you might have saved yourself, for there was no difficulty at all. See now, Socrates, how sad and discreditable are the consequences both to us and to you.” (45d6-46a4)

This completes Crito's case, and it merits careful consideration. The order of the arguments and the crescendo of the final peroration are not to be ignored, and, of course, it must always be remembered that Plato has written the script for Crito as well as for Socrates. Words of the heroic code like “good,” “manly,” “virtue,” “shame,” “want of courage,” “folly,” and “ridicule” are used throughout without any indication that Crito is using them in an outrageous or even unusual manner. It is a matter of general expectation that a man will escape if he can, and a matter of positive disgrace to his friends if they do not aid

him. This matter of general expectation is quite important, for it can be argued that even the dicasts who voted for Socrates' death believed that they were voting for no more than a particularly onerous form of exile.

There is also the note of urgency. All is not lost if now Socrates and his friends act with courage and without delay. To be sure, their past actions can be criticized, but they must now face the situation as it is. Within the present circumstances escape is still possible. Coupled with this is the strong note of regret for what "might have been." The trial might have been avoided, or it might have been managed differently. Here we must take Crito's word. Just how the trial could have been avoided is never made clear, nor can we be certain what different forensic tactics Crito had in mind.<sup>8</sup> Crito blames himself and his friends, but it is clear that the major indictment is against Socrates, and the major responsibility is his also. The past actions of Socrates are under attack. Crito clearly believes that Socrates has made some sort of error or he would not be in his present fix.

At the same time, Crito is clearly taking the view that what is done is done, and that little time should be wasted upon regret. He thus typifies what we shall call here the practical man. At each juncture of events, at each crisis, it is incumbent upon the practical man to have some overview of the alternatives open to action. Some alternatives are safe but sorry. Others contain risks which involve gains, but also possible losses. This is the schema of the problem of decision where elements of uncertainty are involved. Before the trial occurred, the possibility of a safe and certain avoidance of trial had to be weighed against the risk in the trial of either acquittal or condemnation. Now that condemnation has occurred, the practical man sees the alternatives simply as death or attempted escape. The difference between the practical and the impractical man has to do with a basic attitude toward the flow of events in time. It has to do with the aesthetic or perceptual faculty that sees that some things must go with other things. There is a principle of symmetry involved which is suppressed by the practical man and indulged in by the impractical. As applied to decisions, the practical man tends to blot out the shape and conformation of the past. What is done is done. He attempts to determine the exact limits of the present situation and to devise a course of action based upon those limits. Of course he wants to learn from the past, but only so that he may not repeat past mistakes in the future. The impractical man has a higher regard and attachment to the shape of the past which, for him, conveys aesthetic obligations toward the attempted shaping of the future. A couple of crude examples from contemporary politics may help. The



practical American politician believes that China is lost to the Communists, cuts his losses, and attempts to formulate the best policy he can for the future. The impractical politician may feel a special obligation to the Nationalist government in Taiwan. Again, a practical French statesman may hold that France is now a second-class power and formulate his policy accordingly. A De Gaulle acts with a vision of former greatness constantly before him. No man is or has ever been constantly either the completely practical or completely impractical man. The brute factors of human memory and forgetfulness are sufficient guarantors for that. But the brutal fact remains that on specific issues what constitutes success for the practical man may spell failure to the other, and conversely. What one considers an error in procedure, the other may well take as the only proper or right decision.

Just so here, Crito takes a practical view of the situation. In his opinion, the trial should have been avoided or at least conducted differently, but all that is past. At the moment, as he sees it, Socrates has a choice between certain death and the attempt to escape, and he argues strongly for the latter. Thus, the subject of debate has been split. For Socrates, the impractical man, it becomes important not only to defend his decision to remain and die, but also to defend his past decisions and actions, for the present and the past are closely and indissolubly connected for him. He begins:

"Dear Crito, your zeal is invaluable, if a right one; but if wrong, the greater the zeal the greater the danger; and therefore we ought to consider whether these things ought to be done or not. For I am and always have been one of those natures who must be guided by reason (*λόγος*), whatever the reason may be which upon reflection appears to me to be the best; and now that this chance (*τύχη*) has befallen me, I cannot repudiate my own words: the principles which I have hitherto honored and revered I still honor, and unless we can find other and better principles, I am certain not to agree with you."

(46b1-c2)

At least three aspects of this speech should be noted which support our thesis as presented thus far. There is the notion of *logos*, of reason or principle, of a consistency which is impervious to circumstance. There is the contrast of the present with the past. And there is the notion of *tyche* which we take to represent uncertainty. For Socrates, the crucial term is *logos*, the overriding conception that links past and present and conveys imperatives for the future. Socrates is and always has been the sort of person who must act in accordance with reason. With this Crito would of course agree. When, however, Socrates says that he cannot simply abandon the reasons or *logoi* he has formulated in the past, then

it is clear that Crito disagrees, and that there are different views here of what a sufficient *logos* would be. For Crito it is clear that the *logos* formulated at any point in time is to be tempered by circumstance, by that train of events which one can neither control nor predict with certainty and which is called *tyche*. Socrates (and of course Plato too) recognized this sort of *logos* only to reject it. For him a good and sufficient *logos* must be impervious to the slings of outrageous *tyche*. The rubric is evident: decide what is the right thing to do and then do it, no matter what happens. The difficulty lies in discerning what such a *logos* might be. At the same time, we must be careful not to read too much into the text. As is quite clear from the following speech, Socrates is willing to re-examine a *logos* in the light of subsequent events, but it is also clear that a satisfactory *logos* will not need to be changed. Blanks are left in the following quotation from Jowett's version because we are concerned here with the attitude toward the *logos*, rather than with its content.

"What will be the fairest way of considering the question? Shall I return to your old argument about . . . ? Now were we right in maintaining this before I was condemned? And has the argument which was once good now proved to be talk for the sake of talking — mere childish nonsense? That is what I want to consider with your help, Crito: — whether, under my present circumstances, the argument appears to be in any way different or not; and is to be allowed by me or disallowed. That argument, which, as I believe, is maintained by persons of authority, was . . . Now you, Crito, are not going to die tomorrow — at least, there is no human probability of this — and therefore you are disinterested and not liable to be deceived by the circumstances in which you are placed. Tell me then, whether I am right in saying that . . . I ask you whether I am right in maintaining this?" (46c6–47a5, with deletions)

One may detect here a moment of doubt, a human yearning for assurance. This is not the least of those passages in the *Apology*, *Crito*, and *Phaedo* that have made them the sublime account of the passion of Socrates. This is the passage where he stakes his life on the validity of the *logos*, where he repudiates the force of circumstance, where he recognizes the attitude of the practical man and begins to test it against the imperatives conveyed by the *logos*. There is a certain brutality in the assumption that Crito is unaffected by the proximity of Socrates' death, particularly if it is remembered that it was Socrates who scoffed at death in the *Apology*. It would be even more brutal to demand consistency here and to take Socrates' plea for reassurance as a mere pose. For Socrates, as for all other men, death must be, at least to some

degree, the feared unknown. On this basis, any insensitivity to Crito's feelings is clearly pardonable.

It is also most important to note that there are references here to types of reasoning based upon the gauging of probabilities. Such reasoning is here implicitly rejected. For Socrates, a proper *logos* will not be affected by the occurrence or nonoccurrence of some external event. At least that is his opinion concerning the *logos* which is now to be presented. Within the passage cited, the *logos* states "that some opinions, and the opinions of some men only, are to be valued," but this is, of course, only the first link in the coming chain of Socratic dialectic. From this section on, there will be no objections raised on the part of Crito, but we must still inspect the argument closely in order to see how well the previous seven arguments of Crito are answered, and whether or not Socrates will admit error in the past.

Socrates begins: The opinions to be valued are those of good men. The good are the wise (47a7-12). Then the example of the expert athletic trainer is brought in:

*Soc.* Is the pupil who devotes himself to the practice of gymnastics supposed to attend to the praise and blame and opinion of every man, or of one man only — his physician or trainer, whoever he may be?

*Cr.* Of one man only.

*Soc.* And he ought to fear the censure and welcome the praise of that one only, and not of the many?

*Cr.* Clearly so.

*Soc.* And he ought to act and train and eat and drink in the way which seems good to his single master who has understanding, rather than according to the opinion of all other men put together?

*Cr.* True.

*Soc.* And if he disobeys and disregards the opinion and approval of the one, and regards the opinion of the many who have no understanding, will he not suffer evil?

*Cr.* Certainly he will.

(47a13-c4)

The line of reasoning is clear, and it is a common one in Plato. The analogy of the expert has been much discussed. The usual attack has taken the following form: If there is a man of superior knowledge, then one ought to listen to him and obey him; but is there such a person and how is his identity to be determined? This line of defense is oversimplified. It goes too far and too fast; for there are such people as athletic trainers and we do call them experts, nor do we have great difficulty in identifying them. But having admitted this much, we still have the right to pause and consider just what it is that we have

admitted, for the major criterion in the identification of the expert is success. This notion is inescapable. If we are to talk about experts in any meaningful way at all, we are reduced to an operational level of discourse. Ideally, the task or end must be defined, and the expert is the person who demonstrates the ability to accomplish that task. Thus, the trainer who succeeds in producing winning athletes, the mathematician who succeeds in solving a difficult problem, the businessman who makes a million dollars, the politician who gets elected, the second-grader who gets all ten words right on his spelling test, the general who leads the victorious army — all these may well be called experts.

This is not the only way we actually do define the expert. It may well be that it is impossible or undesirable to bring about the kind of situation wherein expert ability may be assessed. For example, it will not do to arrange a real war in order to find out who our expert generals are. Moreover, we should want a series of successes in order to eliminate flukes and flashes-in-the-pan. Hence, we must often make do (to our sorrow) with individuals who claim a knowledge of the rules of the craft, that is, an ability to make rational generalizations about the discipline. Essentially, however, it is clear that the expert need not be able to explain his methods so long as he has demonstrated his success with sufficient frequency to convince his clientele and his peers that he is an expert. The ability to explain one's methods is handy and is often necessary to maintain one's identity as an expert. Ingenuity in accounting for lack of success is a standard part of the expert's stock in trade. But even here, maintaining the status of expert depends upon success in convincing one's clientele, whoever they may be, that one is an expert.

A full-fledged discussion of the expert in Plato would be out of place here, since it would require protracted consideration of the *Gorgias* and the *Politicus* in particular, and of many other passages as well. Such discussion would entail questions concerning the area of competence and the problem of transference. Again, the matter of competence would involve a consideration of the distinction between fact and value and between subsidiary and ultimate goals, and the telling Platonic consideration that among the people the expert must convince is himself. Still it is relevant here to insist that the notion of "expert" must involve the notion of "success." It is also relevant to mention two other aspects which support Socrates' use of the analogy.

First, there is the matter of talent. Not all the second-graders will get all the words right; not all the mathematicians will solve the difficult problem; and it seems likely that not all the trainers, generals, or politicians would be equally successful given equal opportunities. The



mystery of differing capacities remains just that — and Plato continually reminds us forcefully of that.

The other aspect is that of consistency. If the term “expert” entails the notion of success, it is seen that the behavior of the expert is peculiarly goal-oriented, is concerned with prediction, and is calculated to cope with the factor of uncertainty. Given the fact that there are experts in the senses defined above, and given the notorious fact that experts differ, let us posit that there is more than one way of achieving a given goal, that different series of decisions and actions may bring us to more or less identical or equally satisfactory goals. Consistency involves the contention that once one has embarked on a particular series or procedure, the integrity or wholeness of the series demands that it be followed through, not interrupted or replaced by another series which has not been properly initiated. An example of what is meant here might be not switching surgeons in the midst of an operation. This is a rule of action for the non-expert. The point is crudely made, but will not be further analyzed. In sum, if we are not expert ourselves, we are more likely to achieve a goal by following one expert than by attempting to combine the advice of two or more who differ.

With the above discussion in mind, we may tentatively agree with Socrates' argument that we do recognize experts and we do think we ought to listen to them, and a *prima facie* case may be made for following through a single decisional chain with a single expert. Still there always remains the problem of when one decisional chain ends and another begins. When in the chain of events is it proper to voice dissatisfaction with one expert and to engage the services of another? A solution of this problem might run as follows: the reputation of the kind of expert we deal with here lies in his ability to predict. If events do not conform with the expert's prediction, we have a right to be dissatisfied, and it would be here that the expert's ability to justify failure would come into play. Thus, if we follow the trainer's advice but we become weaker and slower, then we may rightfully seek another trainer. The same criteria may be applied to the consideration of a specific course of action. In the *Apology*, Socrates followed a procedure which was to be judged at least in part by the occurrence or nonoccurrence of a single event. If the court had acquitted Socrates, the procedure would have been successful. Since it condemned him, the procedure failed. Certainly this is the way Crito looked at it: “The trial need never have come on or might have been managed differently.” Could one not argue in the face of such failure, that a new procedure, a new course of decision, be mapped out? This is exactly what Crito does. It seems then quite



striking that Socrates uses the example of the expert to oppose the arguments of Crito, when in fact the sort of analogy he uses, the athletic trainer and all the other kinds of expert we know, can rather be taken as adding force to Crito's position. Experts are judged by their success or failure, and that is the attitude of the practical man. Here, however, the matter is much more complicated by what should be evident: the expert in this case is Socrates himself. People who use experts may be justified in abandoning one in favor of another. Experts are expendable in that sense. But can experts abandon themselves, particularly impractical experts?

We omit Socrates' argument from 47c6 to 48a4. It is meant to demonstrate that the opinions of the many are not to be regarded. This is a commonplace in Plato, and it has already been uttered in the immediate response to the second and third of Crito's arguments. It is strongly put even for Plato in that it argues that one who obeys the advice of the many will be so maimed in both body and mind that he will find life not worth living. That the *Crito* should contain a note of particular bitterness against the many is both comprehensible and pardonable. The conclusion and transition are memorable:

*Soc.* Then, my friend, we must not regard what the many say of us; but what he, the one man who has understanding of just and unjust, will say, and what the truth will say. And therefore you begin in error when you advise that we should regard the opinion of the many about just and unjust, good and evil, honorable and dishonorable. — "Well," some one will say, "but the many can kill us."

*Cr.* Yes, Socrates; that will clearly be the answer.

*Soc.* And it is true: but still I find with surprise that the old argument is unshaken as ever. And I should like to know whether I may say the same of another proposition — that not life, but a good life, is to be chiefly valued?

*Cr.* Yes, that also remains unshaken.

*Soc.* And a good life is equivalent to a just and honorable one — that holds also?

*Cr.* Yes, it does.

(48a5-b10)

Not life but a good life. The many cannot compel us to obey, for the most they can do is to kill us. These are grand and heroic words which reverberate down through the ages. Contemporary echoes are surely not lacking. The words are hollow unless uttered in the proper context, when the alternative of death is immediate and certain, but still remains an alternative which is freely chosen. This is exactly Socrates' situation, as it is that of all other men who have refused to recant in the face of

certain death. All of us can think of elemental situations in which conceivably we should prefer certain death to an alternative we consider worse. But none of us can know how we would act if actually faced by that situation. Who knows what tortuous wrestlings of rationalization we should go through, what spasms of guilt and repression, when faced by the awful decision? At the same time, there is a dynamic element in the flow of human affairs. The very act of constructing or picturing a situation in which we would rather die than recant involves a kind of commitment. If the situation arises, if its conformation is such that we cannot fail to recognize it no matter how hard the adjustive and preservative processes of our minds try, and if we choose not to die, then we must be struck by a worse form of guilt, for the horror engendered by the situation itself is compounded by the betrayal of a prior commitment. We may then suppose that in a most grisly way prior commitment makes it easier to die.

The concept of heroism involves a readiness to die in circumstances where most men would choose to live. We have attempted above to make a distinction between the imperatives involved in an elemental situation and those entailed by commitment. But the definition of the elemental situation and the strength of commitment both constitute variables for different men, or perhaps even for the same man at different times. We deal here with differences of degree, but we shall posit that for the hero the elemental situation has far wider limits than for most people and the strength of his commitment is correspondingly higher. Let us make this clearer. There is no question here of a constant relation and continuous variables. We take death here as the most drastic of discontinuities. In this connection, it is important to note that there is in the *Crito* no lengthy speculation, such as occurs in the *Apology*, about a desirable afterlife. For the hero, death must be only the lesser of two evils, and we deal not with continuous quantities, but with levels or thresholds of tolerance. In sum, for the hero the strength of commitment is very great. What is more, since the kind of hero we are talking about has contempt for the standards of the many, it is a commitment rather to the self or to some absolute by which the hero measures himself.

Life and death constitute huge alternatives in human existence, and one doubts the adequacy of an ethic which has been formed without this issue constantly in view. Herein lies the power of the existentialists, who are intoxicated by this theme, while the analysts dabble like children with the proper apportionment of ice cream at high table or with the problem of whether Luke and Matthew will be able to compose

their differences about music-playing time.<sup>9</sup> To be sure, we are not being quite fair to the analysts. It may well be argued that if we cannot compose our differences when not under the shadow of death, if we cannot learn to settle the little issues, how shall we hope ever to settle the big ones? The prophet will thunder back that we are always under the shadow of death, that we must live each day as though it were our last, and it is hard to gainsay this. There remains only the question whether we can function under such circumstances. The mechanisms of forgetfulness, of repression, of control, would seem to indicate that we cannot. Most of us must act like little children who do not believe that they will ever die. We retreat from the big issue and at best snuffle moodily about the edges of it because we can do nothing else. Say what you will about the hero (he is not a likable person), he may be wrong, he may be deluded, but he faces the issue. For the rest of us, the retreat takes many forms. Mostly we just do not think about the issue. And when we do, wondrous are the myriad ways of men. Some thinkers turn death into a pleasant probability, but they keep on living. Others create a world of their own where people do not kill each other and where if people don't listen they can be made to listen. Some philosophers keep on annoying people until they are killed for their trouble; others retreat into academia.

Let us be reasonable. "Not life but the good life." Is this not absurd? Life is surely a necessary condition for the good life. Here speaks the voice of logic, but it is a voice which is constantly contradicted. That men can be trained to march toward certain death is a fact which is not debatable. Nor does the promise of everlasting bliss seem to be a particularly cogent consideration. Many have died without believing in the promise. There are other cases. What of the nurse who enters the leper colony? What about the assassin who destroys himself in killing the tyrant? To speak of the good life, we must speak about the good, and perhaps the good is not definable in words. In ultimate terms, the good is what we willingly die for. We keep returning to the same human dilemma. The only way we prove we really mean it is to die for it, and to die for the good life is a kind of antinomy, and antinomies are absurd. But we can learn from antinomies. Save for those whose faith in an afterlife is absurdly certain, one cannot die for one's own good life. But one can die for the good life of others. This is one solution to the antinomy, a solution which involves the mystery of altruism. One can be cynical about altruism; most of us are compelled to be so in order that we may live with ourselves. Such cynicism turns altruism into a sort of inverted egotism. One does die for one's own good life, for that

blissful period of self-esteem between the point of commitment and death itself. And, the cynic will add, with life there is always hope, for a miracle if nothing else; such selflessness deserves a fitting reward. Yet when all is said and done, our cynic cannot know. All he knows is that he is not a hero.

Still, our cynic has indicated the other solution to the antinomy. Our discussion thus far has dealt with the voluntary choice of certain death. Let us now reintroduce the element of uncertainty. With the insertion of this — and no discussion of the human condition can realistically omit it — “not life but the good life” takes on a whole new range of meaning. It is not that life is a necessary condition for the good life, but that life may or must be a necessary stake for the winning of the good life. This should not be either shocking or surprising. We do not necessarily refer to a Spencerian struggle for survival, although some theorists would push the principle to unthinkable limits. “Winning” here does not mean the defeat of an opponent so much as the successful result of a gamble against uncertainty. In ridiculous but real terms, we risk our lives every time we get behind the wheel of an automobile or cross a busy street. The risk is not very great, but it is there, and it is avoidable, at least in principle. Our lives are so permeated with this sort of risk that we seldom give it conscious thought, and yet we ordinarily act so as to reduce the risk to a minimum, that is, we drive carefully and look both ways. But not always. We may dash across a street more carelessly than is our wont in order to get to an important appointment on time, or we drive more recklessly to get a stricken child to the hospital. There is, then, a continuous if unconscious calculation of conflicting risks. It is exceedingly difficult, perhaps impossible, to give any precise account of this calculation, as our game theorists know to their woe. Within the terms of this second solution to the antinomy, that is, the acceptance of risk to achieve a desired goal, the heroic personality may again be delineated. Briefly, the goals pursued by the hero may or may not be in marked contrast to those of the many about him, but he is willing and often eager to undergo greater than average, or even infinitely great risks, to achieve them. Again, these goals are set by the hero, and he remains the most important judge of whether or not they have been achieved. The determinant is how the good life is defined. If we are to break away from a merely formal analysis of decision, the stakes involved must be closely inspected.

Socrates has said: One must not regard what the many say, but what he, the one man who has understanding of just and unjust, will say and what the truth will say. Not life but the good life is chiefly to be valued.



A good life is equivalent to a just and honorable one.<sup>10</sup> There follows this memorable passage:

*Soc.* From these premisses I proceed to argue the question whether I ought or ought not to try and escape without the consent of the Athenians (μὴ ἀφιέντων Ἀθηναίων); and if I am clearly right in escaping, then I will make the attempt; but if not, I will abstain. The other considerations which you mention, of money and loss of character and the duty of educating one's children, are, I fear, only the doctrines of the multitude, who would be as ready to restore people to life, if they were able, as they are to put them to death — and with as little reason. (48b11-c6)

This passage is as brutal as anything in Plato, embodying a contempt for the many which is, perhaps, justified under the circumstances. Nevertheless, it is not a valid answer to the arguments of Crito. This is an argument *ad hominem* and hardly constitutes a refutation. As was said above, however, the plan of Plato's presentation is to justify Socrates' course of action before direct reference to Crito's arguments. At the end of the dialogue Socrates deals with Crito's arguments in a more adequate fashion. The speech continues, coming to the following climax:

*Soc.* Then we ought not to retaliate or render evil for evil to any one (οὐδένα ἀνθρώπων) whatever evil we may have suffered from him? But I would have you consider, Crito, whether you really mean what you are saying. For this opinion has never been held, and never will be held by any considerable number of persons; and those who are agreed and those who are not agreed upon this point have no common ground, and can only despise one another when they see how widely they differ.

(49c10-d5)

This is as clear a statement of a categorical imperative as exists in the Platonic corpus: Injure no man — not even if he has injured you. It is now clear that Socrates will argue that he injures some one in attempting to escape. This implies that he will injure no one if he remains to die. Crito is puzzled (50a4-5) as he may well be when asked who will be injured by Socrates' escape. Crito had thought that Socrates' friends and children would be injured by his death, but he has apparently accepted Socrates' reply that such is the stupid thinking of the many. If no person will be injured by Socrates' death, *a fortiori* who could be injured by his escape?

*Cr.* I cannot tell, Socrates; for I do not know.

*Soc.* Then consider the matter in this way: — Imagine that I am about to play truant (you may call the proceeding by any name which you like)



and the laws and the government come and interrogate me: "Tell us, Socrates," they say, "what are you about? are you not going by an act of yours to overturn us — the laws, and the whole state, as far as in you lies? Do you imagine that a state can subsist and not be overthrown, in which the decisions of law have no power, but are set aside and trampled upon by individuals?"

(50a4-b5)

We are immediately confronted here by the very difficult problem of civil disobedience. It can be argued that every time any one disobeys a law he weakens that set of institutions which holds society together and keeps it from lapsing into chaotic barbarity. The argument sounds reasonable, but it has weaknesses. For example, it justifies and demands obedience to any law, just or unjust. To be sure, obedience to the law is not put forward here as only or simply a sacred principle. It is the survival and continued well-being of the state that is the primary goal. This offers one way out. One need not obey a law which is not conducive to that goal.

There are other considerations. Once we retreat from the ideal world into a real state where it is conceivable that a law may be incorrect or unjust, then it is also possible to consider the implicit objection: what if everyone were to do as you do? The point is, quite simply, that in the real world not everyone ever will, that is, if the law in question is of any worth whatever. In this connection, it is worth pointing out that under the contract to be discussed below every citizen has the right to withdraw. What if they were all to do so? This remote possibility is not considered, nor should it have been.

Besides, there is an absurdity in saying that legal judgments will have no power if Socrates runs away. If they have no power, he need not run away. What has been ignored here is that amorphous but wide and important area between complete compliance and complete disregard which must be taken into account in any realistic consideration of the power of the law. As was said above, it is possible that practically everyone expected that the formal sentence would result in no more than exile. On this basis, escape into exile would have constituted compliance of a sort.

What is also striking in this passage and in the rest of the dialogue is the device, unparalleled in extent in the Platonic corpus, of the personification of the laws. Its impact is largely emotional, but this needs explanation. Socrates' central imperative is "injure no man," no human being. But laws and states are not people. In a sense, of course, if one injures the laws and the state, one does injure a great many people. But if one treats the laws and the state as a great number of people, then one

suggests that the intentions and opinions of the laws are in fact the intentions and opinions of people — and, as we have seen, this is an equivalence which Socrates must reject. He has no regard for the opinions of the many. Hence, this untoward device of personification. Besides, there is a striking ambiguity in the notion of injury set forth in this dialogue. We have been told at 44d6–10 that the greatest good is to make a man wise and the greatest evil is to make him foolish. If the laws and the state are to be personified, and if Socrates believes that the laws and the state can be in error (as he does, for otherwise there need be no clause in the contract providing for persuasion), then Socrates' whole train of reasoning may be used against him. The revolutionary critic can hurl slogans too: Not the state, but the good state. Could one not argue that the imperative of preserving the state is merely the notion of the many and is far secondary to the prime imperative of making the state better? Certainly many revolutionists have so argued. To submit meekly and die does not befit the true social reformer. There can be no easy refuge in absolute claims of legality or illegality. While Socrates can claim in *Apology* 32 that he would not act against the laws in the trial of the generals after Arginusae or in complying with the commands of the Thirty, the appeal to law for an Athenian could never be more than persuasive. These were certainly instances where Socrates could expect the court to agree, but the law was by no means so certain. We have come to the (perhaps sad) conclusion that the law is what the Supreme Court says it is; at Athens, where there was no supreme tribunal and where precedent was not binding but only suggestive,<sup>11</sup> the status of the law was even less fixed.

Besides, as we have already pointed out, Socrates has suggested a basis for the selective appraisal of laws, that is, whether or not they contribute to the survival and continued well-being of the state. The passage quoted below implies that some laws are more defensible than others.

*Soc.* What will be our answer, Crito, to these and the like words? Any one, and especially a rhetorician, will have a good deal to say on behalf of the law which requires a sentence to be carried out. He will argue that this law should not be set aside; and shall we reply, "Yes; but the state has injured us and given an unjust sentence." Suppose I say that?

*Cr.* Very good, Socrates.

*Soc.* "And was that our agreement with you?" the law would answer; "or were you to abide by the sentence of the state?" (50b5–c6)

Socrates seems to suggest here that the law which requires a sentence to be carried out is particularly easy to defend. This may well be true,

but then Socrates goes on to defend sentences which are known to be unjust because not to comply even with such sentences would be a breach of contract. This is a far more extreme view which is by no means easy to defend. Worse than that, this view is apparently contradicted by Socrates' statement in the *Apology* that he would not comply with a particular verdict of the jury. For our present purpose it is sufficient to note the juxtaposition of the specific statement concerning the sentences of a court to the introduction of the concept of a contract between the citizen and the laws. We too tend to feel in general that the sentence of a court of law should be upheld. This is not to say that we believe that every verdict is just or correct. Ever since the *Oresteia* of Aeschylus, it has been evident that one cannot always say that one side of a case is wrong and the other right. To be sure, the court seeks for justice (and it is essential that the search be sincere and energetic), but in any case society demands and gets a clear-cut decision so that the social process may continue without excessive upheaval. It is possible to interpret the resort to adjudication as an offer of contract. On this interpretation, the state says to the accused: "You may or may not be guilty. Will you submit yourself to our trial process? If we decide that you are innocent (and we recognize that we may be wrong), we shall protect you from those who continue to think you are guilty. If, on the other hand, you are adjudged guilty, you must abide by our decision." With the all-important safeguards, this comes close to a sporting proposition, for the state is willing to honor mistakes which redound to its own disadvantage. It is this last feature which is peculiar to the notion that the verdict of a court of law should be obeyed, and to the notion that a sort of tacit contract is here involved. We would agree. It is typical of the Platonic genius that the insight herein contained is extended to a rather wider domain than we are willing to accept. We will not agree that the notion of contract implicit in the process of avoidable and one-shot adjudication with its corollary of subsequent immunity can be extended to justify compliance with all sorts of laws.

The details of the extended contract become clearer as we proceed. So far, we have been told that a state cannot subsist in which the decisions of the law have no power. We have contended that the escape of Socrates would by no means signify that the laws have no power; nor, indeed, would escape injure the state in the way in which Socrates defines injury. We are now told that there has been an agreement whereby Socrates will abide by the sentence of the state even if it be unjust. This is directly contradicted by the crucial passage in the *Apology*. The laws continue with what seems thus far a dubious

argument. The laws claim that they brought Socrates into existence, that his father married his mother by their aid, that they legitimized his birth, that they supervised his nurture and education. Socrates must admit that he has no objections to these laws.

“Well then, since you were brought into the world and nurtured and educated by us, can you deny in the first place that you are our child and slave, as your fathers were before you? And if this is true you are not on equal terms with us; nor can you think that you have a right to do to us what we are doing to you. Would you have any right to strike or revile or do anything of that sort to your father or master, if you had one, because you have been struck or reviled by him, or received something of that sort at his hands? — You would not say this? And because we think it right to destroy you, do you think that you have any right to destroy us in return, and your country as far as in you lies? Will you, O professor of true virtue, pretend that you are justified in this?” (50e2–51a7)

One hardly knows where to begin in outraged protest against this argument. For the most part, it is not an argument at all. To oppose it is like being against motherhood and in favor of sin. The sentiments of filial piety and patriotism are with us still, and there are strong arguments by which they can be defended. Happily for the opponent of such appeals, the argument goes too far, for it is also alleged that the citizen is the slave of the laws and the state. We need not today hesitate to denounce slavery, and it is worth notice that the reference to the slave-master relation is muted in comparison to the claims of parents, school, and country. Nevertheless, the slave analogy is necessary to the argument, for children must grow up to be men and perhaps fathers themselves. Their change in status is inevitable; a slave remains a slave. The core of the argument, we feel, does have some cogency. The citizen does have an obligation to the state, and a contract between dissimilar parties cannot be composed of symmetrical reciprocities, but this need not mean that one party can abuse the other. That is to confuse power with justice.

In order to forestall the real possibility that the claims of the family (Crito's seventh argument) may be opposed to the claims of the state, the passage continues:

“Has a philosopher like you failed to discover that our country is more to be valued and higher and holier far than mother or father or any ancestor, and more to be regarded in the eyes of the gods and of men of understanding? also to be soothed and gently and reverently to be entreated when angry, even more than a father, and either to be persuaded or if not persuaded to be obeyed? And when we are punished by her,



whether with imprisonment or stripes, the punishment is to be endured in silence; and if she leads us to wounds or death in battle, thither we follow as is right; neither may one yield or retreat or leave his rank, but whether in battle or in a court of law, or in any other place, he must do what his city and his country order him; or he must change their view of what is just: and if he may do no violence to his father or mother, much less may he do violence to his country.” (51a7-c2)

While the passage alleges but does not demonstrate the superior claims of the state to those of the family, the major point of interest is the condition which makes the contract more palatable: there is the alternative of either persuasion or obedience. Thus, entrance into the contract does not mean complete and blind acceptance of every clause in it. There is an option which may be exercised against any particular in it. This is twice stated in our passage and is repeated at 51e7-52a3.

The question of whether or not the contract is entered voluntarily is dealt with in the following passages:

“For having brought you into the world, and nurtured and educated you, and given you and every other citizen a share in every good which we had to give, we further proclaim to every Athenian by the liberty which we allow him, that if he does not like us when he has become of age and has seen the ways of the city and made our acquaintance, he may go where he pleases and take his goods with him. None of us laws will forbid him, or interfere with him. Any one who does not like us and the city, and who wants to emigrate to a colony or to any other city, may go where he likes, retaining his property. But he who has experience of the manner in which we order justice and administer the state, and still remains, has entered into an implied contract that he will do as we command him.” (51c8-e4)

“You, Socrates, are breaking the covenants and agreements which you made with us at your leisure, not in any haste or under any compulsion or deception, but after you have had seventy years to think of them, during which time you were at liberty to leave the city, if we were not to your mind, or if our covenants appeared to you to be unfair.” (52d8-e5)

These passages make clear the sense of the second option. The citizen has the right, after he has come of age, to withdraw. This right remains valid until the citizen has had a fair opportunity of becoming acquainted with the state and its ways. The upper limit is left loosely defined, but Socrates makes it quite clear that in his own case seventy years have been more than enough to make the contract binding. This is a strong



case, and much is made of it in the final paragraphs of the *Crito*. And yet the plea could be made that states and their ways change over the course of time, and that such change involves an element of uncertainty. It is hard to believe that Socrates would have chosen to stay in a state that he knew with certainty would condemn him to death for his activities. The plea can still be made and Crito, in effect, makes it. The city is no longer the sort of place that Socrates should remain in, although for a long time it was. One thinks in our own time of the great generation of expatriates from a once beloved Germany, and we must insist on the absurdity of a distinction that would say the state is all right; it's the people that are no good. Such a state is not subverted by escape. Meek submission only confirms it in its new and evil ways. Taken alone, then, the tacit acceptance of the contract by long residence is not a sufficient argument for Socrates to submit to death. Granted that Socrates is an old man, granted that he is not afraid of death, granted that there is no desirable place of exile, it could still be argued that he has a positive duty to escape, and this is the gist of the third and sixth arguments of Crito. The distinction between the many and the state is not justified, certainly not in the Athens of that time. Socrates' mission is to make people better, not worse.

But the contract contains a second option, and this makes the situation more complex. Three times in the *Crito* we are told that the citizen has the right either to obey the laws or by persuasion to change their view of what is just. But the *Crito* does not tell us whether or not Socrates exercised this option. It is never made clear just how one goes about attempting to persuade a state or laws, particularly if one makes a distinction between men on the one hand and the state and the laws on the other. We must insist that if the option means anything at all, persuasion must be directed not at laws but at people. Despite the silence of the *Crito* on the subject, we make the not very bold conjecture that Socrates did exercise the option of persuasion. He exercised it in the *Apology*. But if this is so, why is it not made clear?

The option must be spelled out. The citizen has the right either to obey the law or to persuade the law that it is wrong.

"... whether in battle or in a court of law, or in any other place, he must do what his city and his country order him; or he must change their view of what is just."  
(51b8-c1)

"In a court of law" is as explicit a reference to the situation of the *Apology* as we shall find. The right to obey or to persuade is a strange sort of disjunction. Switch to a homely situation: Father A commands

son B to wash his face. B's face is not dirty. B knows that his face is not dirty. A magnanimously says to B that B has the right to leave home if he does not like the way A behaves. Then A adds the following interesting proposal. If B stays at home, he has the right to convince A that his face is clean. If B convinces A that his face is clean, he need not wash it; but if B does not convince A, then he must wash it. Now B makes his choice. He chooses to stay at home and persuade A that his face is clean. B presents his case, making the very important point that unlike most boys he does not mind washing his face; it is simply that his face is really clean. A is not convinced. B has failed. On his way to the washroom, B is met by friend C who advises him not to wash his face, but to leave home. B acknowledges that A is wrong, but still feels obligated to wash his face. C argues strongly: "Let's face it, B. You made a mistake. You should have left home at once. Besides, you did not handle A correctly; you should have wheedled. Anyway, your face is clean, and you ought not to wash it." B's response is adamant: "I made a deal. Besides, if I leave home now, everyone will think it is because I mind washing my face, although I said over and over again that that was not the point at all." And then in a musing tone, "Besides, the only way I can convince myself that I don't mind washing my face is by washing it."

Our little scenario is meant to be ridiculous but not sacrilegious. The analogy to the *Crito* is far from exact, but the points to be illustrated are there. The notion of persuasion contained in the second option must be gauged not only by rightness or wrongness, but also, inescapably, by the standard of success or failure. In the *Apology*, Socrates took up the option of persuading the jurors that he was not guilty either of the specific charges advanced by his formal accusers or of the charges put by years of slander. In this he failed:

I speak rather because I am convinced that I never intentionally wronged any one, although I cannot convince you — the time has been too short; if there were a law at Athens, as there is in other cities, that a capital cause should not be decided in one day, then I believe I should have convinced you. (*Apology* 37a5-b1)

This is how the expert speaks when he explains failure. Surely we are being uncharitable, but we shall go even further. This is how the gambler speaks when he "shoots his wad" at Reno roulette: "If they had Monte Carlo rules here, I would have won." But if he knew this, why did he play? For the gambler, the answer is fairly simple. He would rather play and lose than not play at all. Not life, but the good life. This is the way he wants to live. And besides, he did not know he was going

to lose. A gambler who always takes the edge in the odds is not a gambler at all — he is a businessman.

There is something which is undeniably attractive about the gambler. To be sure, we are all gamblers in a very slight sense. But the man who takes great and even foolish risks is an enigma to most of us. To stake the savings of a lifetime on the turn of a card, to face a bull under highly formalized and somewhat disadvantageous conditions, to cross Niagara Falls on a tightrope — all these are foolish activities that cannot be defended rationally. And yet, all of us have at least a sneaking admiration for such reckless heroes. Rationality has nothing to do with it. We are dealing with elements that are atavistic, primitive, perhaps animal. Pursuing the phylogeny-ontogeny thesis of the psychoanalysts, we may observe the behavior of children. Johnny comes home with a bloody knee because he jumped down a whole flight of stairs. Why? "Because they dared me to." The argument is practically unanswerable, at least within the conceptual frame of our own society. For it may be held that such attitudes are culturally determined, that the "dare" and the "hero" are not so conceived, condoned, and admired elsewhere. Be that as it may, it seems quite clear that the Greek society we are speaking of was permeated with such values. Competitiveness and other aspects of the game are ingrained here in a manner that is astounding to the investigator who looks at Greek life with a fresh eye. Contests seemingly occur at any and every opportunity. We need not belabor the point. Dramatic festivals, athletic games, and the institution of the palaestra all serve to point up the centrality of the game in Greek life. Occasions for demonstrating one's *arete* seem to have been continually present.

We are interested in why Socrates chose death in the *Crito*, but by now it should be clear that this is inevitably connected with the question: why did Socrates go to trial and deliver the *Apology*? There is no question of compulsion here, except insofar as a man is compelled to do what he does because of his character and temperament. *Crito* says that the trial might have been avoided, and we must believe him. If so, why did Socrates go to trial? And we are suggesting that at least part of the answer is that they dared him to.

The anatomy of the dare, of the challenge, is most relevant here, for it represents one interesting way in which the rôles of the hero and the expert may coalesce. For example, it is not within tolerable limits to dare a legless man to jump a flight of stairs. But a man who has a reputation for stair-jumping may be goaded into jumping an unconscionable number of stairs. In fact, he may be enticed into jumping until he fails, because he himself cannot know the limits of his own powers until he

tests them. In Greek terms, the hero is called upon to demonstrate his prowess, his *arete*. But prowess is a form of expertise and is demonstrated by success. In addition, however, prowess demands a certain style. This last is necessary because the hero must not cheat; again unlike most people, the hero interprets the rules very strictly:

And I have another thing to say to them: You think that I was convicted because I had no words of the sort which would have procured my acquittal — I mean, if I had thought fit to leave nothing undone or unsaid. Not so; the deficiency which led to my conviction was not of words — certainly not. But I had not the boldness or impudence or inclination to address you as you would have liked me to do, weeping and wailing and lamenting, and saying and doing many things which you have been accustomed to hear from others, and which, as I maintain, are unworthy of me. I thought at the time that I ought not to do anything common or mean when in danger: nor do I now repent of the style of my defense; I would rather die having spoken after my manner, than speak in your manner and live.

(*Apology* 38d2-e5)

The hero, unlike the common run of experts, defines success in very exacting terms. When he answers a challenge, he tacitly accepts every stylistic requirement of the challengers. He will even add stipulations not intended by his challengers. There is only one formal requirement of the stipulation — the additional condition appended by the acceptor of the challenge. The stipulation must make the challenge more difficult. Thus, if challenged to leap eight barrels, the ice skater may at his own discretion add that he will consider a leap over fewer than ten barrels as failure. He has the unquestioned right to do this. Such a stipulation has interesting effects. The issuers of the challenge become uneasy. They are forced to assume a kind of responsibility they had not foreseen. Ten barrels can be mighty dangerous, and if the ice skater breaks his leg, it will be their fault because they issued the challenge in the first place. They may well become resentful at being committed beyond their expectations. In a sense, they can no longer win, and in this way the stipulation is insurance against defeat. If the ice skater leaps ten barrels with ease, and in the heroic tradition he always does, the victory is satisfying indeed. If he fails, then of course he must pay all bets. But he pays with a flair. He has not failed their challenge but his own.

If we turn to the *Apology*, we find the above schema nicely complicated. While Athenian courts were drastically different from our own, they did have a set of procedures and expectations which had grown up over time. Winning the sympathy of the jury was even more important there, if that is possible, than in our own courts. They expected it. The



charges against Socrates were extremely nebulous. The details of the case have been discussed for millennia and we need not linger over them. Suffice it to say that since the charges were not of the sort that could be proved or disproved conclusively, the challenge issued to Socrates was in effect: Win the sympathy of the jury if you can. By a series of bold stipulations, Socrates transformed the nature of this challenge. Socrates' major defense, whether the result of Machiavellian planning (which we do not believe) or the result of an absolute confidence in the rightness of his past life (which we do believe), is a tremendous stipulation in the form of a counterchallenge flung at the jurors: Either kill me or acquit me.

The counterchallenge is a tactic which is peculiarly apposite to the game of persuasion, and the game of persuasion is itself peculiar, for the goal is not to demonstrate one's prowess, but to convince the other side that it is not to their interest to demand such demonstration. In sum, it is a poker situation, a bet where the recipient of the challenge raises the stakes. As with any other stipulation, the issuer thereby saddles himself with an additional commitment, but the probability that the demonstration need not be performed is thus increased. For now, the other side faces a difficult decision. Either they are not convinced and they accept the increased stakes or they back down, not because they are convinced that they will lose, but because they are unwilling to undergo the increased risk. So far as the game is concerned, this is sufficient indication of successful persuasion. Paradoxically, the means are also the goal.

Just so in the *Apology*, Socrates' goal is to persuade the jurors, and he attempts to do so by raising the stakes. The jurors are now to be faced by the difficult decision: Is what Socrates did so serious that he deserves to die for it? Very few of them believe that. It is admitted throughout the *Apology* and *Crito* that the very worst Socrates would have had to suffer would be exile, generally taken to be a much lesser penalty than death. For Socrates, it is very important to convince the jurors that he means what he says, that if judged guilty he will accept no other penalty but death. Socrates is out of order here. The discussion of penalties is ordinarily irrelevant to the defense against charges. Penalties are to be discussed only after guilt has been established. By now, it is clear that Socrates' strategy demands that he be out of order. He raises the stakes to the ultimate limit for men in order to persuade the jurors that he means what he says. In order to convince them that he is not bluffing, he must emphasize again and again (as he does) that he is not afraid of death. This, then, is the way to interpret the crucial passage in the *Apology*:



And therefore if you let me go now, and are not convinced by Anytus, who said that since I had been prosecuted I must be put to death (or if not that I ought never to have been prosecuted at all); and that if I escape now, your sons will all be utterly ruined by listening to my words — if you say to me, Socrates, this time we will not mind Anytus, and you shall be let off, but upon one condition, that you are not to enquire and speculate in this way any more, and that if you are caught doing so again you shall die; — if this was the condition on which you let me go, I should reply: Men of Athens, I honor you and love you; but I shall obey the god rather than you, and while I have life and strength I shall never cease from the practice and teaching of philosophy.

(*Apology* 29b9–d5)

This is the strategy of raising the stakes. Other modes of stipulation are seen again and again throughout the first speech. Socrates will not speak in the usual manner; not only will he answer the charges of his formal accusers, he will answer all his accusers, old and new, formal and informal. There follows the grandest stylistic stipulation of all:

Perhaps there may be some one who is offended at me, when he calls to mind how he himself on a similar, or even a less serious occasion, prayed and entreated the judges with many tears, and how he produced his children in court, which was a moving spectacle, together with a host of relations and friends; whereas I, who am probably in danger of my life, will do none of these things. The contrast may occur to his mind, and he may be set against me, and vote in anger because he is displeased at me on this account. Now if there be such a person among you, — mind, I do not say that there is, — to him I may fairly reply: My friend, I am a man, and like other men, a creature of flesh and blood, and not of “wood or stone,” as Homer says; and I have a family, yes, and sons, O Athenians, three in number, one almost a man, and two others who are still young; and yet I will not bring any of them hither in order to petition you for an acquittal. And why not? Not from any self-assertion or want of respect for you. Whether I am or am not afraid of death is another question, of which I will not now speak. But having regard to public opinion, I feel that such conduct would be discreditable to myself, and to you, and to the whole state. One who has reached my years, and who has a name for wisdom, ought not to demean himself. Whether the opinion of me be deserved or not, at any rate the world has decided that Socrates is in some way superior to other men.

(*Apology* 34b7–35a1)

If all this is a bluff, then it is a magnificent bluff. But of course it is not a bluff in the ordinary sense of the term. It is clear that there is a deadly sincerity involved here. The aspect of sincerity may be clarified by two examples, one tragic, the other comic. The tragic one is the

wrenching dilemma of our own time and is concerned with the strategy of threat and counterthreat. Our strategists of conflict have pointed out with gruesome clarity how crucial it is for one international opponent to convince the other of his sincerity. We do not want to use the bomb, but the only way we can constrain the other side is by convincing him that we do intend to use it if attacked. But let us not think of the unthinkable. Turning to the comic example: manager says to battered fighter between rounds, "You have him on the run; he's afraid he'll kill you." And this is what the *Apology* does, whether planned or not. It puts the jurors on the run.

Socrates fails and they vote him guilty. But the game is not over. There is still the grisly debate over penalty and counterpenalty, and within this debate there is still a slim chance of victory. In a sense, the jurors have called Socrates' bluff. If he really meant what he said, he will propose no counterpenalty to death. In a magnificent passage, Socrates sticks to his guns, proposes entertainment at public expense as a fitting penalty, and the game is still on. Had he persevered, he might have carried it off — no one can know. But Socrates breaks, as any human being eventually must, and he proposes the counterpenalty of a fine. As we know, this was a mistake. It is conceivable that jurors teetering on the brink concluded that he had been bluffing after all. In the end, Socrates resembles Hector more than Achilles.

The problem of the *antitimia*, of the penalty of one mina, later increased to thirty by the urging of Socrates' friends, has been much discussed. As is well known, Xenophon's *Apology* (23) explicitly denies this whole episode. Happily, we need not meet the problem of historicity, since we are concerned only with Plato's Socrates. Still it is interesting that that bluff sportsman Xenophon should sense the importance of not giving way at this point. It has been argued that the fine of one mina was an insult to the audience, like tossing pennies to a bad performer, and that the hoplite Socrates could easily have afforded more, had he really meant to save his own skin. Upon this hypothesis, and it is an imposing one, the change to thirty minas attests that Socrates' friends really tried to help him and that Socrates did listen to them. This last is not questioned. But was it an insult to the audience? We cannot know. Socrates pleads poverty elsewhere (31) in the *Apology* and he claims that a *mina* is all that he can afford to pay. We might as well believe him; seek for irony and ye shall find it.

The strategy of the *Apology* has been laid bare. With the omniscience of hindsight, we may allege that Socrates never had any chance of gaining complete acquittal. In a sense, the game was lost with the verdict of

guilty. Had he carried off the magnificent ploy of proposing public entertainment as a fitting penalty, Socrates would still have had to live on with the thought that he had been voted guilty and that he lived on by the mere favor of the judges. But it should be noted that in the real world of trials and jurors, a verdict of innocent would not have been much different. One can tell a jury over and over that one wants no favors, but that does not mean that one is not going to get them. Had Socrates been acquitted, he could still never know whether or not he had been the recipient of the jurors' favor. Death is the cleanest solution open to heroes.

The reference to Achilles and to heroes is not out of place, as the following passages show:

Some one will say: And are you not ashamed, Socrates, of a course of life which is likely to bring you to an untimely end? To him I may briefly answer: There you are mistaken: a man who is good for anything ought not to calculate the chance of living or dying (*κίνδυνον ὑπολογίζεσθαι τοῦ ζῆν ἢ τεθνάναι*); he ought only to consider whether in doing anything he is doing right or wrong — acting the part of a good man or of a bad.  
(*Apology* 28b3-9)

The phrase "to calculate the chance of living or dying" is the answer to the riddle raised previously as to the proper solution of the antinomy in "Not life but the good life." The Socratic solution is indeed the one based upon risk, modified by heroic considerations. Calculation is explicitly rejected because heroes do not act as the rest of men do. Heroes have formed a view of the good life which is so strict and so precious that they will accept infinite odds in the risk to preserve it.

Whereas upon your view, the heroes who fell at Troy were not good for much, and the son of Thetis above all, who altogether despised danger in comparison with disgrace; and when he was so eager to slay Hector, his goddess mother said to him, that if he avenged his companion Patroclus, and slew Hector, he would die himself — "Fate," she said, in these or the like words, "waits for you next after Hector"; he, receiving this warning, utterly despised danger and death, and instead of fearing them, feared rather to live in dishonor and not to avenge his friend.  
(*Apology* 28b9-d1)

In the light of the above, there can be no doubt that Socrates sees himself in the rôle of Achilles. But there are important differences between the two. For one thing, no one can say that Achilles accepted either solution to the antinomy. He does not die for the good life of

others, nor does he die as the result of a losing risk. There is neither uncertainty nor altruism in Achilles' choice of a short and glorious life. There is a splendid simplicity in the career of the Homeric hero. The hero will die as all men must, and from the height of Olympus his life is like that of a falling leaf, perhaps a moment longer or shorter than that of others. Achilles never hesitates. He kills and he is killed, and that is the end of that.

For Socrates, the good life is more complex. He has spent his life trying to make himself and others better. There is a huge "why?" in the life of Socrates that seems never to have bothered Achilles. Again, unlike Achilles, Socrates, like the rest of us, must operate in the face of uncertainty. Altruism and heroism and uncertainty together form a knot of confusion quite foreign to the simple Achilles. One cannot say "kill me and be damned" to people one is trying to save and improve, and they do not want to kill him anyway. Besides, life and death are not the issue; justice is. If they acquit him for the right reasons, Socrates presumably wants the acquittal. But in fact he can never know whether it is justice or pity that motivates their verdict. He can thunder at them that he does not want pity, that he does not fear death, that he is as much a hero as Achilles, but they need not believe him. Whether he likes it or not, a successful plea may always be taken as a bluff. Philosophers do not seek death; that is simply not the way they live.

Note that there is no talk here in the *Apology* about the nature of Achilles' choice. Nothing is said about it being absolutely ethically wrong for Achilles to injure Hector; nothing is said about affection for lost friends being a mere delusion of the many. Discussions of this sort are beyond the scope of the Homeric hero who accepts the commitment to the heroic life and the heroic death. One violent death demands another in a pleasing sort of retaliatory symmetry, and the hero would have it in no other way. Achilles made his choice, knew that he would be killed, spent his short life with death as a constant companion, and died in a way that we can only accept as fitting and just. Achilles' commitment went beyond risk as only a fictional hero's can, and it involved death in a way that is fitting only for the man of violence.

Socrates' case is different. The philosopher's vocation does not ordinarily demand the choice of certain death. Like other men, he may be placed in situations where he will risk death, but that is not the same thing. For Plato and Socrates, "not life but the good life" still involves a presumption for life rather than death. So far as we know, Plato died in bed. This is not meant to be a slur. Philosophers *qua* philosophers simply do not get the chance to play the rôle of Achilles, because they



do not seek to live the life of Achilles. Philosophers do not consider killing their opponents a valid form of refutation, nor do they consider their own voluntary deaths as a sufficient demonstration of their views. All that a voluntary death proves is that the philosopher attests in the most drastic manner open to humans the sincerity of his beliefs. Voluntary death is not a necessary part of the philosopher's mission. At the same time, one of the endearing aspects of the philosopher is that he is not simply trying to convince others; his main opponent in the give-and-take of philosophical repartee is himself. Now, while the inter-subjective or interpersonal debate between philosophers necessarily rests upon demonstration and proof (sincerity is not a coin of exchange), sincerity is an important part of the internal dialogue. The history of philosophy demonstrates, if nothing else, that there has never been a body of theory which cannot be traced back to at least one postulate which must be taken on faith. "... and those who are not agreed upon this point have no common ground, and can only despise one another when they see how widely they differ." In the internal dialogue of the philosopher, it is of central importance to consider whether or not these basic postulates are sincerely held. It is conceivable that the internal dialogue may formulate the crux in such a way that suicide becomes a logical and necessary step toward convincing oneself that the central beliefs are sincerely held. We are told that Empedocles leaped into the volcano. But even in this case, the philosopher did not demonstrate the validity of his beliefs, for there can be no such demonstration in this life. He merely attested to his sincerity in the most drastic way open to man. Even as he hurtled to his death, it is conceivable and philosophically charitable to suppose that he was still in a state of uncertainty. For truth is prior to proof in any deductive demonstration, and deductive certainty has been the unattainable but essential goal of every philosopher until quite recent times. In the case of Socrates and Plato, suicide did not constitute an integral step in the internal dialogue. Socrates did not, just as Plato did not, actively seek death (although some kinds of Freudian interpretation would question this). On the whole, life was preferable to death:

For I am certain, O men of Athens, that if I had engaged in politics, I should have perished long ago, and done no good either to you or to myself.  
(*Apology* 31d6-e1)

Despite being wrenched from context, the passage is sufficient to demonstrate the trivial fact that Socrates, like most of us, also accepted the notion that life is a necessary condition for the good life. It is



important to point out that the seeking of certain death is not logically required in such a philosophy. It is fully consonant with this philosophy that life may or must be risked in the pursuit of the good life, but the choice of certain death, as in the *Crito*, is not and cannot be logically justified because it leads to a contradiction. In this sense, the imperative obeyed in the *Crito* is not philosophical. Socrates' situation is not that of Achilles, but it is a heroic demand to which he responds. And yet, in a most paradoxical fashion, the demand is also philosophical in that it pertains to the inner dialogue. The philosopher cannot actively seek certain death. But when the crisis of decision is thrust upon him through the vagaries of human activities, through the cumulative collision of discrete and numerous human motives both beneficent and the opposite, through the resultant vector of human history which is no man's intention and may be called destiny or God's will or *tyche*, when such a confrontation takes place, the philosopher may well find overwhelming the temptation to test the inner core of belief in the face of that visceral and, if you like, irrational fear of death that all men share.

We have tried to explain why Socrates chooses death in the *Crito*. To say that it is in obedience to the laws has seemed to us shallow. To say that it is because he despises death has seemed to us inhuman. All we shall admit is that it is fair. It is the payment of a debt of honor, the payment of a gentleman who has lost a wager and who pays because he cannot otherwise live with himself. There has indeed been a contract, and the notion of a contract pervades the latter half of the *Crito*, but it has not been the blanket contract with the laws and the state which is explicitly stated in the text. The contract which is binding is the wager, the gamble, the commitment involved in the trial. Socrates has contracted with the court and with himself to convince them not of his innocence but of his worthiness to live on as he always has lived. In order to do this, he has modified by stipulation the original tacit contract with the court which called for Socrates either to win the sympathy and pity of the court or to pay the penalty. For the noblest of reasons, Socrates could not accept the contract of wager in this form, and so he undertook to win their respect rather than their sympathy. The nature of the stipulations whereby he modified the contract are of central importance, for each of them involved him in commitments from which he could not withdraw in the subsequent internal dialogue without endangering the inner core of belief. The central stipulation was the counterchallenge hurled again and again at the court that he was not afraid of death and that they must either kill him or let him be. Was this a bluff or was it not? Bluff is not the right word, and neither is threat.

In our world, the rarity of a contest for respect rather than sympathy, for dignity rather than fearsomeness, for honor rather than gain, has robbed our strategists of an appropriate vocabulary. In any case, a striking aspect of the successful bluff or threat is that its sincerity can never be demonstrated or even tested. Only in failure can its sincerity be shown.

In the last pages of the *Crito*, Socrates emphasizes the fact that he never exercised the first option of withdrawal. We noted the curious fact that while the second option of persuasion is outlined three times it is never clearly stated whether or not Socrates exercised this option. One can only conjecture why this should be so, but a strong candidate for the proper explanation is that Socrates' condemnation represented a kind of defeat, a failure — and Greek heroes do not fail. They accomplish what they set out to do and then they take the consequences. Socrates too must take the consequences, but they are the consequences of failure. He has lost the wager (for the best of reasons, to be sure) and now he must pay. What is of special interest to our interpretation is how Socrates' view of the necessary consequences is connected closely with the stipulations he made in the contract of wager:

“Moreover, you might in the course of the trial, if you had liked, have fixed the penalty at banishment; the state which refuses to let you go now would have let you go then. But you pretended (*ἐκαλλωπίζου*) that you preferred death to exile and that you were not unwilling to die. And now you have forgotten these fine sentiments, and pay no respect to us the laws, of whom you are the destroyer; and are doing what only a miserable slave would do, running away and turning your back upon the compacts and agreements which you made as a citizen.” (*Crito* 52c3–d3)

The bluff is still being called, this time by Socrates himself. His sincerity is at stake and the person he must convince is himself, and this is the central motivating principle in the harsh decision of the *Crito*. There is more than a trace of delusion in all that follows, where the entire stress is laid upon his unwillingness to exercise the first option of withdrawal. The aching distinction between then, before the wager was entered, and now, after the wager has been lost, is never clearly drawn:

“For just consider, if you transgress and err in this sort of way, what good will you do either to yourself or to your friends? That your friends will risk being driven into exile and deprived of citizenship, or will lose their property, is tolerably certain.” (*Crito* 53a8–b3)

But of course he could have withdrawn before the wager without these consequences to his friends. All these disagreeable consequences to his

friends were entailed in the stipulation of no penalty but death. Their sensibilities, their affections, their love for him, their sense of loss, their subsequent feelings of failure, were thrown into the hopper of devising the strongest stipulation possible. No mention is made of this and we miss a note of fitting regret. Socrates' friends too would welcome the opportunity of demonstrating their sincerity, but they are not to be given it.

And the children:

"Say that you wish to live for the sake of your children — you want to bring them up and educate them — will you take them into Thessaly and deprive them of Athenian citizenship? Is this the benefit which you will confer upon them?"

(*Crito* 54a1-4)

The claim rings hollow. Citizenship among the men who kill a Socrates? Again we remember a stipulation: I shall not display my children to you, although I have them and although other men would. His sons too were staked and risked in the grand ploy of stipulation. They cannot now be placed on the other side of the scales in pondering his decision to die.

What should have been stated clearly and is not is that Socrates gambled. He gambled and lost. "Injure no man" is the categorical imperative which has been stated. Socrates, as he sets out on his gamble, intends to injure no man; he intends to win. But the man who gambles must also take into account the consequences of losing. What bothers us is that by some mode of selection Socrates can toss out some consequences of his actions as not being unjust, like the claims of friends and family, while he will not toss out others. We submit that there are conflicting claims, that Socrates will be injuring somebody or something no matter what he does. This is the human dilemma, and it is not fairly faced in the *Crito*. We feel that for man there should be an inspection of what might have been, an inspection coupled with regret. Again, for man there must be the consciousness that every alternative including passivity involves injury to something. Decision is a painful process, or at least it should be. Shall we worry about the sensibilities of personified states and not about the sensibilities of men? There is a case for Socrates' remaining to die — but there is also a case for his escaping. He must do one or the other, and one looks for some agony of decision. To some extent it is present. Socrates does deal with the opposing case, but he minimizes and rationalizes it out of existence. In the denigrating of one set of claims as the delusions of the many and in the personification of the impersonal state we see the underlying strategy of the dialogue. But the device of personification is dubious, for it embodies

exactly the conviction which it is meant to oppose: what counts are the claims of people, not things.

We hold that the decision to die is not based simply on the primacy of the claims of the state, although that is the overt conclusion of the *Crito*. More compelling is the fact that the decision to die is the claim of a debt of honor. But before concluding in this vein, there are some conflicting views that must be faced. We have insisted on treating Socrates as Everyman, but perhaps he was not. Unlike Achilles, who knew the future and had scant regard for right and wrong, and unlike Everyman, who has only a dim view, if that, of either the future or of the certainly good, Socrates had his *daimonion ti*:

This sign, which is a kind of voice, first began to come to me when I was a child; it always forbids but never commands me to do anything which I am going to do.

(*Apology* 31d2-4)

O my judges — for you I may truly call judges — I should like to tell you of a wonderful circumstance. Hitherto the divine faculty of which the internal oracle is the source has constantly been in the habit of opposing me even about trifles, if I was going to make a slip or error in any matter; and now as you see there has come upon me that which may be thought, and is generally believed to be, the last and worst evil. But the oracle made no sign of opposition, either when I was leaving my house in the morning, or when I was on my way to the court, or while I was speaking, at anything which I was going to say; and yet I have often been stopped in the middle of a speech, but now in nothing I either said or did touching the matter in hand has the oracle opposed me. What do I take to be the explanation of this silence? I will tell you. It is an intimation (*κινδυνεύει*) that what has happened to me is a good, and that those of us who think that death is an evil are in error.

(*Apology* 40a2-c1)

It is not seemly for those of us who do not hear voices to belittle the claims of those who do. Before such mysteries, Everyman must retreat in awe. We do not know what makes a man into a hero, a seer, or a saint. We can only remark that the voice Socrates hears, as he tells us, issues only negative commands. This is curious, but it has the effect of leaving Socrates at least partially within the human condition of uncertainty. "It is an intimation," he says, and this is the language of uncertainty and risk, no matter how slight. To this extent at least we need not abandon Socrates as a model for Everyman.

The other factor with which we must deal summarily is that of an agreement with the state and the laws. The duties, obligations, and privileges of citizenship are also matters which are not to be slighted, and we would not have it appear that they have been belittled in all that



precedes. The claims of the state are important, and the fact that they are backed by force does not weaken their validity. But power entails its own responsibilities. The riddle of community will not be solved here. Still we can insist that the state is made up of people, of a group of people engaged in the common endeavor of attaining the good life, however that be defined. When the claims of the good life and the claims of the state are diametrically and inexorably opposed, it is by no means a foregone conclusion that the claims of the state are superior either in worth or, in the long run, in force. It is most relevant to our thesis that there are passages in the *Apology* which can mean nothing else.

The possibility of persuasion is a mighty one. To the extent that a society allows the centers of power to be approached by persuasion, to that extent such a society is praiseworthy. But persuasion is a strange entity. One must be willing to be persuaded, and this is a state of affairs that cannot always be arranged. Disobedience to the contract, it is implied, would be all right if there were no options of withdrawal or persuasion. But must the options be exercised in that order? Surely one can try to persuade first, and then, if unsuccessful, one may withdraw. Persuasion is an option to be used before withdrawal, if the options are allowed to be taken up in logical order. But if it is taken that one may exercise only one of the options, then this is an unreasonable demand that has not been clarified in the *Crito*. In fact, however, it is not the state but Socrates himself who has disallowed the option of withdrawal and has thus turned a reasonable demand into a game of high stakes. Socrates has lingered too long over the task of persuading his countrymen. By undertaking the challenge of persuasion within the heroic context of a trial, Socrates has brought it about that the second option of withdrawal is no longer visible as a right, but as a penalty. This is unavoidable, given the power and institutional framework of the state. The fact that exile is still available as a penalty can only be praised. For the heroic Socrates, however, withdrawal at any time could only be an admission of failure, and so he feels little compunction in formally resigning the option in order to raise the stakes. He has committed himself beyond recall, as heroes do.

The strategy failed, and now Socrates feels compelled to pay the penalty. In the final paragraphs of the *Crito* he shores up his decision to die by other considerations. Having lost the gamble, it would be slavish to abscond. Even if he were to escape, this would now be no solution to the woes of his friends and children. If he escapes now, he will be looked at askance, and the verdict that he is a corrupter of the laws will seemingly be confirmed by his flight. He will be convicted of a greedy

desire of life. In short, he will make himself ridiculous, a note that is sounded twice (53a; 53d). Here we come to the close of the discussion. In the end, there is only one person whom Socrates must convince, and that is himself. He does not want to appear slavish, cowardly, ridiculous. But to whom? If he is satisfied with the correctness of his actions, the sensibilities of others are to be disregarded, just as those of Crito are disregarded. What he must remain faithful to is a heroic conception of the self. There is something ruthless about this, as there is about every Greek hero.

Somehow or other we all seem to be struck by the rightness of Socrates' decision to remain and die — and this too for those who are not impressed by the cogency of the arguments in the *Crito*. The rightness lies not in the inviolability of the contract of citizenship, but in what might be called the ethical structure of the game. We cannot escape the conclusion that Socrates entered the game voluntarily, that he raised the stakes in a most flamboyant and heroic manner, and that he played the game with style. But the structure of the game involves payoff — both winning and losing. When one plays the game so magnificently, there is somehow an inherent expectation that one will pay one's losses with a flourish. It is in this manner that the past controls the future and that prior commitments have a hold on the alternatives of present action. That Socrates did not have a chance of winning is irrelevant, for, in the first place, that is the sort of *ex post facto* knowledge that is helpful to no one, and, in the second place, no one forced him to play. More important, no one forced him to play in the manner and style which he adopted. By stipulation, Socrates made the contest peculiarly his own, and in a sense he has no one to blame but himself.

On this hypothesis, it is no longer puzzling why Socrates chose to die. By his own actions, he made death a peculiar test of his own sincerity, and being the man he was, he had no other choice. A more important question is why did he take up the challenge and why did he modify it by stipulation? We can admit with Socrates that friends and family have no superior claim once the game has been played and lost. But surely the claims of friends and family should have some weight in the consideration of whether or not to take up the challenge in the first place. It is at this point that the possibilities and consequences of loss must be pondered. To win is fine. To risk may be unavoidable. To stipulate may be heroic. But the costs of losing should be brought into the calculation somewhere. We have taken "not life but the good life" as the principle underlying the inevitability and even desirability of undergoing risk for what you want, need, or for what your very being

cries out. But the slogan must be tempered by the other categorical: "Injure no man." If we are to take this seriously, we might come up with the notion that a man has the right to risk under any circumstances whatever he chooses, provided that what is risked is strictly his own to do with as he wishes. There is, of course, no such pure situation, and we cannot escape the wrenching aspects of the human dilemma. We cannot and do not argue that Socrates should have attempted to escape. But Crito's arguments are worthy of more consideration than they receive in the dialogue. Throughout the *Crito* we seek and get only faint glimmers of the note that should be clearly there: "You may be right, Crito — but it is too late." If we are to condemn Socrates at all, it is because he risked what was not entirely his.

## NOTES

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2. A. W. H. Adkins, *Merit and Responsibility* (Oxford 1960) 263, 264.

3. J. W. Jones, *The Law and Legal Theory of the Greeks* (Oxford 1956) 2-3.

4. Jowett's version (occasionally modified) is used throughout for elegance and convenience. The Greek is Burnet's Oxford text.

5. Cf., e.g., M. Fox, "The Trials of Socrates: An Interpretation of the First Tetralogy," *Archiv f. Philosophie* 6 (1956) 226-61.

6. E. Barker, *Greek Political Theory: Plato and his Predecessors* (London 1918) p. 123.

7. Adkins (above, n.2), 259-60 and elsewhere.

8. The wealth of alternative procedures in Athenian litigation is indicated in R. J. Bonner, *Lawyers and Litigants in Ancient Athens* (Chicago 1927), esp. chap. 9.

9. Cf. E. Gellner, *Words and Things* (London 1959) 217-18; R. B. Braithwaite, *Theory of Games as a Tool for the Moral Philosopher* (Cambridge, England 1955).

10. On this equation, see the discussion of Adkins (above, n.2) 256.

11. Cf. Bonner (above, n.8) 181.

## NOTES ON SOME POEMS OF CATULLUS

BY STEELE COMMAGER

QUINTILIAN'S statement (*Inst. Or.* 10.1.96) that Horace was "almost the only lyric poet worth reading" would seem to have imposed a feeling of special responsibility on admirers of Catullus. They have felt it necessary to prove not only that Catullus was a lyric poet, and more of one than Horace, but also that he was the lyric poet incarnate. Quintilian was of course perfectly justified. "Lyric," like most ancient literary terminology, had a technical meaning, referring to songs written to be sung to the lyre. Only because Horace wrote in the metres so used by the Greeks is he a lyric poet, and only on that basis does he claim to be one.<sup>1</sup> In the course of two thousand years, however, the term "lyric" has taken on an extraordinary weight of subjective accretions, until by now it has become as hospitably amorphous as "tragic." The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines a lyric as "a short poem directly expressing the poet's own thoughts and sentiments"; Paul Valéry termed it "la développement d'une exclamation"; a recent French critic has explained it as "an explosion of ideas and sentiments"; and the great Catullan scholar Munro speaks of "the lyric of the heart," which becomes in the next sentence "the true lyric."<sup>2</sup> If such definitions are no more satisfactory than those of most literary terms, there is, nevertheless, general agreement on what the attributes of a lyric are: simplicity, spontaneity, passion, directness, and sincerity. Those, at any rate, are the qualities most often assigned to Catullus. Milton's "simple, sensuous, and passionate," and Fénelon's "simplicité passionnée" are regularly invoked; Duff refers to Catullus' "aerial lightness rivalling Shelley's skylark qualities"; Sellar speaks of his "frank outpouring of emotions"; and another critic describes his "frank, loveable, but careless nature. Irrepressible love and hatred bubble over from his lips." A recent study of Catullus' "romanticism" praises the "romantic urge to self-revelation or self-communication in which writing becomes no longer a mere work of art, but a free overflowing of feeling."<sup>3</sup> Such formulations would appear to derive partly from Shelley's apostrophe to the skylark, and partly from Wordsworth's definition of poetry as "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings." Yet critics might have remembered that though Shelley admired the skylark's "profuse strains



of unpremeditated art" he did not claim to reproduce them, and that Wordsworth managed to channel his own exuberant feelings through successive drafts and editions of his poems.<sup>4</sup>

The approach that sees in Catullus — specifically, in his love poems — a poet concerned only with pouring forth his feelings to Lesbia can be an inhibiting one. Partly because it makes us overlook the technical skill of these poems — though that has received a good deal of attention by now — but, more important, because it tends to concentrate our attention too narrowly on the poems as vehicles of communication to a single person. We are inclined to see them as footnotes to the romance, to use them in reconstructing the affair; we assign them a chronological order, dating the lovers' first encounter, a period of happiness, Lesbia's betrayal of Catullus, and a final rupture between the two; we speculate on the effect a poem must have had on Lesbia, and her response to it. We might do well to remember T. S. Eliot's reminder that the normal vehicle for communicating with one's beloved is prose,<sup>5</sup> and ask instead whether the poems might not have an equally important function as instruments of discovery and control, written not so much for Lesbia's benefit as Catullus' own. And this in turn may lead us to wonder whether we should continue to think of Catullus as a paragon of ingenuous expressiveness, or whether that is not to mistake the kind of poetry that he wrote.

One of the poems most frequently cited as an example of Catullus' "simplicité passionnée" is 7:

- Quaeris, quot mihi basiationes  
tuae, Lesbia, sint satis superque.  
quam magnus numerus Libyssae harenae  
lasarpiciferis iacet Cyrenis  
5 oraclum Iovis inter aestuosos  
et Batti veteris sacrum sepulcrum;  
aut quam sidera multa, cum tacet nox,  
furtivos hominum vident amores:  
tam te basia multa basiare  
10 vesano satis et super Catullo est,  
quae nec pernumerare curiosi  
possint nec mala fascinare lingua.

"Mere childlike delight in multitudinous kisses"; "an outburst of wild amorous passion"; "he revels to distraction"; "a novice just entering an Elysium of love."<sup>6</sup> The poem suggests, rather, a formal catechism: question (*quaeris . . .*), answer (*quam magnus numerus . . .*), and conclusion (*tam te basia . . . satis et super Catullo est*). Nor are the tone and

vocabulary of the first simile (3-6) compatible with the idea of "mere childlike delight." The references are almost excessively literary; if Lesbia is the poem's recipient, Callimachus is surely its patron. Not only is the language Greek in expression,<sup>7</sup> but the geographical exactitude is worthy of Callimachus himself. Moreover, the references to Cyrene,<sup>8</sup> Callimachus' birthplace, and to Battus, the name both of Cyrene's mythical founder and of Callimachus' father,<sup>9</sup> point to that Hellenistic poet so explicitly that some scholars have speculated that Catullus might be imitating a lost poem of Callimachus.<sup>10</sup> The rhetoric of the lines is, in any case, deliberately portentous, allusive, and recondite. These are hardly the accents we expect in an "outburst of wild amorous passion."

By comparison, the parallel between the number of kisses Catullus desires and the number of stars seems immediate and familiar. The collocation of the similes suggests the union on which the poem as a whole relies, a union of distance and passion, of irony and involvement. Even within each simile such a mingling of dissimilars persists. The displaced adjective *aestuosi* (5), here applied to Jove, has been thought to conjure up the torrid lover.<sup>11</sup> Yet beside the oracle of *aestuosi Iovis* stands "the sacred tomb of ancient Battus": the effect is one of age, coldness, and remoteness. Similarly, the burning sands, a measure of Catullus' infinite longing, are yet those of "silphium-bearing Cyrene" — the word *lasarpiciferis* describes a herb known for its medicinal effects.<sup>12</sup>

The picture of the starry night has something of the same double impact. The logical effect of the simile may be to intensify the hot intimacy of Catullus' passion — *tam te basia multa basiare* — but its emotional effect is quite different. The view of the vast silent<sup>13</sup> night, like that of Battus' tomb, chills and distances us. Moreover, Catullus here combines in an unprecedented manner two traditional conceits, that of the stars as an example of vast numbers, and that of the stars as watchers, *ἐπίσκοποι*.<sup>14</sup> To cite the multitude of stars was familiar enough, but in such a comparison it is only Catullus' stars that are also lovers' witnesses. The stars, the measure of the infinitude of Catullus' love, are at the same time the remote — one might almost say the amused — spectators of his love among an infinity of others.

It is precisely these two elements of emotion and detachment that the poem fuses. The whole action, in a sense, takes place on those allusive sands, burning, yet with medicinal associations, that lie halfway between the oracle of torrid Jove and the sacred tomb of ancient Battus. The two elements confront each other most clearly in line 10. Though the line's opening, *vesano*, proclaims Catullus' madness,<sup>15</sup> its close, *Catullo est*,

detaches the author from it, for it is a third person to whom Catullus refers: he does not say "I." What begins as a subjective cry ends as an ironically objective statement. At the same time that Catullus feels the unique passion of his love he recognizes that it is, after all, only one of many such *furtivi amores*.

"It is not for Alexandrine daintiness that we value Catullus any more than it is for excursions into the pseudo-classic conventionalism of the eighteenth century that we value Burns. The gold in both is depth of passion uttered in simple and unforgettable words."<sup>16</sup> The partitioning of the learned Catullus from the passionate Catullus still haunts criticism,<sup>17</sup> usually in terms of a division between the long poems (61-68) and the short ones, and it frequently reappears implicitly in judgments of 7. Martial's comment, *pauca cupit qui numerare potest* (6.34), is often quoted approvingly, to the point where we are reminded of Dr. Johnson's magisterial dismissal of the Metaphysical poets. Thus Marmorale observes "*chi è vesanus non scherza garbatamente sul numero dei baci*," and concludes that the poem shows nothing but a "levità del sentimento."<sup>18</sup> One might as well decide that the pastoral elegy, with its ostentatiously mannered form, could not be the vehicle of any powerful emotion. It is the very strength of Catullus' feelings that compels him to control them so carefully; the poem adapts itself to what Coleridge called for, "a more than usual state of emotion with more than usual order." The sophisticated language and recondite allusions of 7 are not to be annotated and dismissed as an ornament. They are intrinsic to the poem, and stand as a deliberate bar to that "direct expression of feeling" supposed to be Catullus' chief characteristic. The poem is not a lover's cry. It is intended to control the feelings that it expresses, and to control them by the very form in which it expresses them. By the act of writing such a poem Catullus forces himself to become, in part, one of the *curiosi*, a detached observer of the passion he proclaims. Catullus the lover may be *vesanus*, but Catullus the poet is not. It is that distance that the poem creates, and insists upon.

The stars of the seventh poem, with their associations both of immediate feeling and of objective distance, might be taken as an epitome of several of the better known Lesbia poems. An obvious example is 51, a close translation of Sappho 2 (Dhl.), and generally agreed to be the first, or among the first, of the poems to Lesbia:

Ille mi par esse deo videtur,  
ille, si fas est, superare divos,  
qui sedens adversus identidem te  
spectat et audit

- 5 dulce ridentem, misero quod omnis  
eripit sensus mihi: nam simul te,  
Lesbia, aspexi, nihil est super mi  
[vocis in ore,]
- lingua sed torpet, tenuis sub artus  
10 flamma demanat, sonitu suopte  
tintinant aures, gemina teguntur  
lumina nocte.
- otium, Catulle, tibi molestum est:  
otio exultas nimiumque gestis:  
15 otium et reges prius et beatas  
perdidit urbes.

The verbal changes in Catullus' version, aside from the last stanza, are minor but suggestive.<sup>19</sup> *Te spectat et audit, dulce ridentem* translates Sappho's description of the favored lover "listening to your sweet voice and lovely laughter" (*ἄδν φωνείσας ὑπακούει καὶ γελαίσας ἡμέροεν*, 3-5). Where the Greek has two verbs to describe the actions of the girl and one for the spectator, Catullus reverses the emphasis, also adding the adjective *misero*. The alterations, admittedly minor, suggest that the poem will be even more self-centered than Sappho's. More specifically, the addition of *spectat* has a structural function when taken with the substitution of *omnis eripit sensus mihi* for *καρδίαν ἐν στήθεσιν ἐπτόαισεν* (6).<sup>20</sup> Sight is added to hearing — but only that both alike may be "snatched away." The poem records the "snatching away" of all control or clarity; yet the way in which it does so is exquisitely controlled. Technically, there is the anaphora of the opening lines, the new coinage *demanat* (balanced by the archaic *suopte*), the chiasmic arrangement of *lingua torpet, flamma demanat* — *tintinant aures, teguntur lumina*, the identical enjambments and caesuras of the third stanza, and the bold enallage of *gemina teguntur lumina nocte*.<sup>21</sup> The addition of *spectat* and *identidem* has a calculated aural effect. The sharp *t*'s fairly dissolve, at the stanza break, into the lovely *dulce ridentem*, and we feel the nervous agitation of Lesbia's partner confronted by her soft calm. So too *tintinant*, a rare word, is elegantly onomatopoeitic, an effect confirmed by the ringing consonants of the unusual *suopte* ("ein müssiger Zusatz," comments Kroll).

Though we may prefer Sappho's poem as the more moving in its directness, we cannot but admit Catullus' attempt to improve upon it stylistically. Yet these are the accents of one who cries *lingua sed torpet*. And the precision with which Catullus charts the dissolution of his senses suggests the larger problem that the poem poses — why choose



a translation to express the first fine careless rapture of love? For more important than the changes that Catullus makes in Sappho is the fact that he borrows from her at all.

The explanations offered are various. He felt in Sappho's poem the same quality of passionate love;<sup>22</sup> he sought out a translation because of the diffidence of his youth;<sup>23</sup> he wished to imply that Lesbia was in some sense a modern Sappho;<sup>24</sup> the technique offered him a refuge from embarrassment — "after all, it was only a translation."<sup>25</sup> These explanations are all sufficiently likely, but there may be a further reason as well. Tenney Frank speaks of "the aeolic metres fettering Catullus' impatient utterance."<sup>26</sup> Yet surely Catullus chose Sapphics in part because he wished his impatient utterance fettered. By forcing his own feelings into Sappho's words and metre Catullus is, to some extent, substituting a technical problem for an emotional one:

Then as th' earth's inward narrow crooked lanes  
Do purge sea water's fretful salt away,  
I thought, if I could draw my pains,  
Through Rime's vexation, I should them allay,  
Grief brought to numbers cannot be so fierce,  
For he tames it, that fetters it in verse.<sup>27</sup>

Yet Catullus adapts himself not only to Sappho's metre, but to her emotions as well. By doing so he creates a frame for his own feelings that is both formal and traditional, to the point where his poem has been taken to be a stylistic exercise.<sup>28</sup> Certainly the symptoms that he describes were, by that time, abundantly familiar. They recall not only Sappho specifically, but Sappho the arch-lover, the creator, as it were, of the very vocabulary of love. Plato (*Phaedr.* 251a-b), Apollonius (3.959-64), and Theocritus (2.103-10) have passages similar enough to Sappho's Ode to have been suspected of being imitations, and an epigram of the neoteric writer Valerius Aedituus illustrates how stereotyped the lover's reactions had become:<sup>29</sup>

Dicere cum conor curam tibi, Pamphila, cordis,  
quid mi abs te quaeram, verba labris obeunt,  
per pectus manat multus subito mihi sudor:  
sic tacitus, subidus, dum studeo, pereor.

In reading 51, Catullus' contemporaries would think not only of Sappho, but would see mirrored in his poem the whole tradition of stricken lovers. Even the word *misero* (5), which Catullus adds to Sappho, seems less a particular description than the badge of a stock figure, the *miser amator*.

At the very moment, then, that Catullus is most immediate and personal he is also most mannered and traditional. We need not say, however, that his *tenuis flamma* is therefore but a faint fictitious flame, and that the strongest love the poem expresses is the author's love of dabbling in amatory formulas. We might rather say that such a form was the necessary complement to the strength of his feelings; that only in so conventional a style did Catullus feel that he could contain the new emotions sweeping over him. The poem's imitative form acts as a kind of steadying frame, forcing him to acknowledge that however remarkable his emotions seem, they are no more than the common experience of mankind. It allows him to stand outside himself and view himself as merely one in an endless series of lovers. The poem as a whole might be seen as an elaboration upon the phrase *vesano Catullo* (7.10), for at the same time that it proclaims his intense involvement it suggests an equally intense effort at detachment. Catullus may feel that all emotional control has been snatched away, but the poem, while recording that state, also counteracts it.

Whether the final stanza belongs to 51 has been debated at length; it seems dubious that there was anything corresponding to it in Sappho.<sup>30</sup> Editors since Achilles Statius have argued that the lines were merely an isolated fragment, or perhaps part of another poem that was lost, and were attached to 51 because of the identical metre.<sup>31</sup> Even those who have maintained the unity of the poem have emphasized its discontinuity. The final stanza has been variously taken as Lesbia's answer to Catullus;<sup>32</sup> as an addition written at some later time;<sup>33</sup> as the arguments of Catullus *genius*;<sup>34</sup> as a deliberate ἀπροσδόκητον;<sup>35</sup> as an Epicurean repudiation of sensual love;<sup>36</sup> as an indication of Catullus' desire to free himself from passion and "dedicare il suo tempo allo studio, seguendo l'impulso dell' animo che aspirava alla gloria."<sup>37</sup> Certainly Catullus seems to have made the leap from passionate confession to objective reasoning as abrupt as possible, for where we expect to find some equivalent to the violent physical symptoms of Sappho's fourth stanza we have instead a stanza of traditional moralizing (cf. Theog. 1103-4). Yet the discontinuity is more apparent than real. Ferrari has pointed out the ways in which the last stanza complements the first structurally.<sup>38</sup> In both, an anaphora in the first two lines; in both (though not in Sappho or in the middle stanzas of 51) the two first lines are complete in sense; in both, a climax (*par deo* — *superare divos*; *otium molestum* — *otio exultas nimiumque gestis*); in both, enjambment between the third and fourth lines, with the verbs in the Adonics for the only time. Also, we might in *beatas* (15) catch a reference to the

god-like state described in the first stanza, remembering Cicero's equivalence: *vita beata . . . par et similis deorum* (N.D. 2.61.153).

The structural analogies may not be altogether persuasive, but there is a continuity of logic and feeling as well. The last stanza stands, in a sense, as the sermon to the first three's *exemplum*. They show Catullus "exulting," even "over-indulging," in his *otium*, his "thoughts of making what is impossible come true."<sup>39</sup> Moreover, the concluding comparison between Catullus' own case and the downfall of kings and rich cities, disproportionate as it may seem, represents an effort to see his own experience in universal terms, as a typical experience of mankind. And is that not what the first three stanzas also do? The poem opens with a third person and closes with one; but in fact it has been, even when ostensibly the most personal, something of a third-person statement throughout. Insofar as Catullus adopts manifestly second-hand language and feelings he makes his "I" practically a third-person pronoun. By casting his own emotions in the mold of a typical — or even the typical — lover, Catullus attempts the same objectivity that the last four lines make explicit. In these terms the final stanza stands not as a miscellaneous addition, but as a miniature of the whole.

Although the eighth poem seems to have little in common with the fifty-first, the two are not dissimilar in conception, particularly if we allow the *otium* strophe to stand at the end of the latter.

- Miser Catulle, desinas ineptire,  
et quod vides perisse perditum ducas.  
fulsere quondam candidi tibi soles,  
cum ventitabas quo puella ducebat  
5 amata nobis quantum amabitur nulla.  
ibi illa multa cum iocosa fiebant,  
quae tu volebas nec puella nolebat,  
fulsere vere candidi tibi soles.  
nunc iam illa non volt: tu quoque inpotens noli,  
10 nec quae fugit sectare, nec miser vive,  
sed obstinata mente perfer, obdura.  
vale, puella. iam Catullus obdurat,  
nec te requiret nec rogabit invitam.  
at tu dolebis, cum rogaberis nulla.  
15 scelestas, vae te, quae tibi manet vita?  
quis nunc te adibit? cui videberis bella?  
quem nunc amabis? cuius esse diceris?  
quem basiabis? cui labella mordebis?  
at tu, Catulle, destinatus obdura.

"*In hac igitur seriori cogitatione repente fit philosophus et secum instituit colloquium*," observed Doering.<sup>40</sup> If the *otium* strophe of 51 represents the mind's comment upon the feelings expressed in the first three, 8 presents a running argument between the two. Catullus' love for Lesbia emerges not only from the elegiac memory of happier days (3-8), but also from the negative vision, so to speak, of 15-18. At the same time that Catullus dismisses a hypothetical future lover, he re-creates the happiness of the past,<sup>41</sup> their former *iocosa* (6).<sup>42</sup> The lines convey his love hardly less explicitly than do the first three stanzas of 51, while the last line comes with almost the abruptness of the *otium* stanza. However, the last line represents not a sudden leap to a rational view, but rather a return to that which opened the poem (1-2) and reappeared in 9-14. Alternating waves of stern reason and sentiment shape the poem. As opposed to the fond memories of the past or the passionate questions as to the future, the language of the mind's part, as it were, in the *colloquium* is flat and prosy: *quod vides perisse perditum ducas . . . nunc iam illa non volt: tu quoque inpotens noli*. The lines read almost like a legal brief, a careful step-by-step progression drawn up to force logic upon feelings that refuse to accept it.<sup>43</sup> The dialogue between reason and emotion is perhaps most succinct in the refrain: *fulsere quondam candidi tibi soles* (3; cf. 7). Few readers have not been sensible to the pathos of the lines, with their suggestion of the life, the light, and the love of the past.<sup>44</sup> Yet the lines do not merely evoke the past, but, equally important, they attempt to put the past in its proper perspective. Just as every fair day passes, so love comes to an end; the tense of *fulsere* is emphatic. At the same time that the refrain revives the past it also puts it in the context of things that naturally die. It functions, in this respect, somewhat as the *otium* stanza does, which conjures up the romantic associations of great kings and rich cities only to recall their overthrow. Different as the tones may be, both passages are alike in their attempt to set an individual experience in universal terms.

Traditionally, the eighth poem has been held to be one of the most immediate in its appeal to our sympathies. Macaulay, we are reminded, could not read it without tears; Tyrrell felt that in it Catullus "pours forth in burning scazons, which ring like handfuls of earth thrown on a coffin, his agony"; and, more recently, Tenney Frank has pronounced it "one of the most naïve utterances of love in all the range of poetry . . . We have grown too sophisticated for such verse."<sup>45</sup> Yet the poem has been susceptible to a quite different interpretation, just as 51 has been taken as a stylistic exercise. The colloquial cast of the language is apparent, and it is hard to parallel the wealth of technical amatory terms



outside of Plautus.<sup>46</sup> The conversational style (*vale, puella*, 12) also reminds us of drama, and as E. P. Morris pointed out some fifty years ago, the whole situation adapts itself to those of Roman comedy. Pointing out parallels, especially from Plautus, to the stock situation of the lover who cannot force himself to leave,<sup>47</sup> Morris argues that the poem, far from being an emotional cry, is "all a jest," and written for Catullus' and Lesbia's own amusement: "a light and humorous presentation of a lover — Catullus himself playing the part — trying to move the heart of the inconstant girl by appeals and pathos and sternness and threats."<sup>48</sup>

Neither view, whether sentimental or formalistic, seems altogether satisfactory. Ellis (*ad loc.*) comments upon the "egoistical tendency" shown here and elsewhere by Catullus' frequent use of the second- or third-person address to himself. Yet might not such addresses equally well express an attempt to escape from egoism, an effort to see oneself, psychologically as well as grammatically, as a second or third person? Moreover, Catullus' address to himself by name is here, as in 51, less important than the tacit self-address inherent in his taking up of a traditional rôle. It is perhaps possible to accept Morris' evidence without endorsing his conclusion, for if it would be foolish to deny the poem's comic overtones, it would be equally foolish to maintain that those are the only ones. From the poem's first word Catullus pictures himself, to be sure, as the *miser amator*, the typical frustrated lover of comedy. Yet that does not mean that he conceives of his situation as merely literary or comic. By assuming the conventional posture of the *miser amator* Catullus is able, even when he seems to be speaking most directly and passionately, to separate himself from the figure he cuts in the poem. He both plays a part on stage, and stands observing in the wings. At the same moment that he feels most isolated in his suffering, he can reassure himself of its commonness, even its comic triteness.<sup>49</sup> Marmorale terms 8 a "strano e contraddittorio carne," and concludes that one can only say *sine sensu vivere amantes*.<sup>50</sup> Catullus knew as much. By writing the poem in the particular form he chose, he evokes all the generations of helpless and illogical lovers, and sees himself, almost abstractly, mirrored in them. The poem is not so much a record of his own emotions as an attempt to escape them, even if the escape lie only in the recognition that it is all lovers, and not merely one, who can be thus afflicted.

A good deal of attention has been paid to the distinction between Catullus' short poems in various metres and his epigrams. Although

some differences, particularly in vocabulary and frequency of metaphors, have emerged, there seems to be no marked difference in the subjects Catullus chose to treat in each.<sup>51</sup> However, in some of the epigrams it is easy to feel that Catullus exploits the form of the couplet for effects that the polymetrics, though they might allow, do not encourage. Surely Catullus did not seize upon the elegiac couplet simply because "he needed the musical effect of the pentameter to enhance his feeling or thought."<sup>52</sup> The musical effect of the pentameter — and we must have a hospitable definition of "musical" to include many of Catullus' pentameters — is often less pertinent than the effect of the couplet as a whole, its tendency toward clarity through precision, compression, and antithetical statement. His best-known couplet (85) is an obvious example:<sup>53</sup>

Odi et amo. quare id faciam, fortasse requiris:  
nescio, sed fieri sentio et excrucior.

The precedents usually cited are not so dissimilar in sentiment as in tone and tightness of structure.<sup>54</sup> Catullus seems to be adapting one of the early uses of the couplet, that of the funeral epitaph.<sup>55</sup> Even the apostrophe *requiris* suggests the address to a passer-by common in grave inscriptions, as well as illustrating Catullus' tendency to objectify his own feelings. Now the primary function of an epitaph is to present in the smallest possible compass the essence of a life, to achieve a final order of a sort. Catullus here further compresses the epigram's natural tightness. The lines could almost be reduced to the first three and the last three words. Each group is elided: also, *odi et amo* is equivalent metrically to *excrucior*. It is, too, in the most precise sense, its emotional equivalent, since *odi et amo* asserts an irremediable crossing — a *crux*, so to speak, of Catullus' feelings. *Sine sensu vivere amantes*: it seems as if Catullus felt that if he could state his own senseless situation baldly and concisely enough, the very statement might bring some clarity, some sense, to it. *Excrucior* is not only balanced, but in part redeemed, by *sentio*.

The eighty-fifth poem seems an example, though rather a primitive one, of the kind of poetry Robert Graves describes:

Poems should not be written, like novels, to entertain or instruct the public; or the less poems they. The pathology of poetic composition is no secret. A poet finds himself caught in some baffling emotional problem . . . The poem is either a practical answer to his problem, or else it is a clear statement of it; and a problem clearly stated is half-way to solution. Some

poets are more plagued than others with emotional problems, and more conscientious in working out the poems which arise from them — that is to say more attentive in their service to the Muse.<sup>56</sup>

Graves seems to be elaborating, in his own particular idiom, the famous statement of J. S. Mill: "Oratory is heard, poetry overheard." As Graves goes on to describe the poet: "and unless he despises his fellow-men, he will not deny them the pleasure of reading what he has written while inspired by the Muse, once it has served his purpose of self-information."<sup>57</sup> Catullus' attempt at "self-information," at a "clear statement" of an emotional problem, is as apparent in 72 as in 85:

- Dicebas quondam solum te nosse Catullum,  
 Lesbia, nec prae me velle tenere Iovem.  
 dilexi tum te non tantum ut vulgus amicam,  
 sed pater ut gnatos diligit et generos.  
 5    nunc te cognovi: quare etsi impensius uror,  
       multo mi tamen es vilior et levior.  
 qui potis est, inquis? quod amantem iniuria talis  
       cogit amare magis, sed bene velle minus.

The movement is stately and controlled. Each couplet is closed; spondees are in a high proportion; the caesuras of the hexameters are identical; the polarities are carefully developed. There are contrasts between Lesbia and Catullus (*dicebas . . . dilexi*), lust and love (*tenere . . . dilexi*), past and present (*quondam . . . nunc*), pretence and reality (*dicebas . . . nunc te cognovi*), passion and reason (*uror . . . tamen es vilior*), love and respect (*amare . . . bene velle*).<sup>58</sup> The echo of *nosse* (1) in *cognovi* (5) is important. The words mark the structural division between the halves of the poem, the first four lines summarizing a past distinct from, but necessary to, the situation described in the last four lines. But more interesting than the words' positions is the change in meaning. *Nosse* bears its erotic physical sense,<sup>59</sup> *cognovi* the normal intellectual one. The change in meaning itself measures the change in Catullus, from ignorant infatuation to rational awareness.<sup>60</sup>

The poem's movement toward a "clear statement" through such antitheses is most concise in the third couplet. *Impensius* is usually explained as "the meaning is simply 'more exceedingly,'" or "*ardo con maggior violenza*."<sup>61</sup> Yet its suggestions are both more complex and more precise. The radical meaning is "heavier": to that sense *levior* answers. But the secondary meaning is "at greater expense," and to that sense *vilior*, "cheaper," corresponds. At the same time that Catullus' emotions burn more heavily, his reason sees Lesbia to be of less weight;

at the same time that his feelings are the more extravagant, his mind realizes her to be the cheaper. *Vilior et levior* is, then, not a vague expression of disapprobation (as in the parallels cited),<sup>62</sup> but an exact, if paradoxical, elaboration upon *impensius*. The sentence approaches the kind of involved conceit usually associated with the Metaphysical poets, and is virtually unparalleled in Catullus. Exploiting all the resources congenial to the epigram, he mirrors and stabilizes his particular emotional problem. It is hard to feel that, in Graves' terms, Catullus is even "half-way to solution," but there is no mistaking the effort to discover, define, and control, for himself, his experience.

The length of 76 has occasioned considerable discussion as to whether it should be considered the first Latin elegy.<sup>63</sup> Yet the fact that the poem is breaking away from one form is as important as the fact that it is breaking into another. Though the relationship to poems such as 85 and 72 may be only that of an ungainly child, there is at least a family resemblance. The kind of antithetical balancing that informs 72 reappears at least once. The elision of the final two words of line 13,

difficile est longum subito deponere amorem,

makes them curiously close to the last two words of line 25:

ipse valere opto et taetrum hunc deponere morbum.

By an almost Lucretian punning,<sup>64</sup> his love is recognized and affirmed to be a disease. Yet if such a technique recalls the contrast of physical and intellectual, past and present, in the *nosse-cognovi* play of 72, it must be admitted that it is an isolated instance. In general, the structure seems almost incoherent by comparison.<sup>65</sup> Gone are the closed couplets, the careful poise, the taut balance, that we associate with the epigram. It would seem as if Catullus were here dealing so immediately with his feelings as to be unable to reduce them into the strict form that he chose. Formally, 76 marks not so much the culmination of the epigram as its frustration.

Interpretations of 76 have tended to emphasize its philosophical or biographical possibilities.<sup>66</sup> It has been thought to yield evidence of Catullus' Epicureanism, of his Stoicism, of his anti-Socratic viewpoint, of his initiation into the Dionysiac rites, even of the fact that he was dying of consumption. Less attention has been paid to the poem's technique. Edna St. Vincent Millay termed it "the most beautiful short poem in any language I know."<sup>67</sup> Yet its beauty lies, surely, in the shape of the whole, in its emotional honesty and energy; line by line its beauty is hardly conspicuous.<sup>68</sup> Such passages as lines 7-8:



nam quaecumque homines bene cuiquam aut dicere possunt  
aut facere, haec a te dictaque factaque sunt

or lines 13-16:

difficile est longum subito deponere amorem,  
difficile est, verum hoc qua lubet efficias:  
una salus haec est, hoc est tibi pervincendum,  
hoc facias, sive id non pote sive pote

deliberately eschew any elegancies of style. The blunt and almost legalistically prosy self-address<sup>69</sup> recalls parts of 8 or the *otium* stanza of 51. As in those poems, Catullus seems to be straining for objectivity. But where 8 and 51 exploited certain literary traditions to that end, 76 is more straightforward. As though to avoid anything but the most direct kind of statement, Catullus makes explicit the parallels between his own case and that of mankind in general. Not until the fifth line does it become clear that a particular personal situation is at issue, and private statements are adjusted to general maxims throughout. Abstractions — *homini* (2), *homines* (7), *difficile est* (13, 14), *si quibus umquam* (17) — frame his constant self-address. The clearest example is in 13-16 (quoted above). In the first line *difficile est* introduces an abstract proposition, in the second a private injunction, while the third and fourth lines each combine the two. The poem shows no doctrinaire bias, whether Epicurean, Stoic, or Mystic, but merely uses certain quasi-religious, quasi-philosophical commonplaces<sup>70</sup> as a kind of mirror for an intensely private experience. At the same time that Catullus issues a personal plea to the gods, he couches it in abstract and objective terms, constructing a formal and traditional frame for his own situation.

One of the reasons 76 is so affecting is that it appears to be a kind of final statement, summing up and epitomizing Catullus' feelings about love and betrayal. So much is true in a particular as well as a general way. The similarities of sentiment and vocabulary to poems such as 73 or 30 are obvious, but there are also some less obvious reminiscences of other Lesbia poems,<sup>71</sup> as though Catullus were deliberately trying to see the whole course of their affair in a new perspective. The third line, congratulating the man who has violated no *fides* or *foedus*, is stated abstractly; yet clearly it has a personal application. It was in these terms that Catullus conceived of his own love (87.3-4):

nulla fides ullo fuit umquam foedere tanta,  
quanta in amore tuo ex parte reperta mea est.

And when Catullus confesses (76.23-24) that he will not demand of the gods that they make Lesbia love him in return, it seems an ironic repudiation of an earlier prayer (109):

Iucundum, mea vita, mihi proponis amorem  
hunc nostrum inter nos perpetuumque fore.  
di magni, facite ut vere promittere possit,  
atque id sincere dicat et ex animo,  
ut liceat nobis tota perducere vita  
aeternum hoc sanctae foedus amicitiae.

Similarly, the references to an *ingratus amor* (76.6) or an *ingrata mens* (76.9) seem a bitter retrospect of a previous view of Lesbia's love (107.1-4):

Si quicquam cupido optantique optigit umquam  
insperanti, hoc est gratum animo proprie.  
quare hoc est gratum†nobis quoque†carius auro  
quod te restituís, Lesbia, mi cupido.

The self-question *quare iam te cur amplius excrucies?* (76.10) evokes the end of 85 (*sentio et excrucior*) only to dismiss it. That balance of love and hate can no longer be indulged. But the clearest reference to another poem is also the most poignant, as Catullus looks back briefly to the most innocent days of his love. Compare 51.5-10:

misero quod omnis  
eripit sensus mihi: nam simul te,  
Lesbia, aspexi, nihil est super mi  
[vocis in ore,]  
lingua sed torpet, tenuis sub artus  
flamma demanat . . .

and 76.19-22:

me miserum aspiciate et, si vitam puriter egi,  
eripite hanc pestem perniciemque mihi,  
quae mihi subrepens imos ut torpor in artus  
expulit ex omni pectore laetities.

The repetition of *miser*, *aspicio*, *eripio*, *torpor*, and *sub artus* guarantees that the reminiscence is deliberate. Where previously to look upon Lesbia was to rise to the level of the gods, Catullus now implores the gods to look upon him in his misery; the halting speech (*lingua sed torpet*) that was once the sign of his passion is now recognized to have

been the first symptom of a disease (*torpor*); the love that once seemed a delicate flame is now known to be a sickness creeping through his limbs; the feelings for Lesbia that once snatched him from himself he now begs the gods to snatch from him.

These echoes are not, of course, a literary elegance for the reader's delectation. As Kroll (*ad loc.*) puts it, "er dichtet nicht für den Leser, sondern für sich." They represent an attempt to confront as concisely as possible the way he felt once and the way he feels now. And to see the two clearly is, in some measure, to detach himself from both. The despairing conclusion of the poem makes it easy to feel that he has not succeeded; and one reason, surely, that 76 seems so moving in comparison with 72 is precisely the fact that he does fail. The kind of ordered view that Catullus achieved in 72 is absent here, as is the formal structural order; yet his effort to achieve it is no less. At the same time that Catullus explicitly pleads to be freed from his feelings, he uses the very form of the poem to the same end.

Poems 11 and 58 may be read as a pair. 58 presents fewer problems:

Caeli, Lesbia nostra, Lesbia illa,  
illa Lesbia, quam Catullus unam  
plus quam se atque suos amavit omnes,  
nunc in quadriuiis et angiportis  
glubit magnanimi Remi nepotes.

The poem is usually assigned to a period when, we are told, Catullus had finally succeeded in freeing himself from his passion for Lesbia. Quite likely it is late. But to date Catullus' poems on the basis of what we surmise to have been the course of their affair can be dangerous, not because a poem demands to be read in a vacuum, but because our preconceived ideas of the circumstances surrounding it are sometimes likely to blind us to certain elements in it. Thus Ellis (*ad loc.*), terming the poem one of the last about Lesbia, posits that "there is no conflict of feelings as in 8, 76, 85." Yet the first three lines are nothing if they are not a love poem — and whether or not the affair was ended is less important than the fact that in writing these lines Catullus relives it. As in 8, Catullus re-enters the past. *Illa Lesbia, quam Catullus unam / plus quam se atque suos amavit omnes* — the lines seem less a specific description than a formal epithet (cf. 8.5, 37.12, 87.1) evoking their whole past together. Even the repetition of Lesbia's name is incantatory, summoning up all the fairer days of their love, while the formal use of their names suggests that they, like Septimius and Acme, were once the very

pattern for lovers. The contrast between *unam* and *omnes*, each in the same emphatic position, also suggests an ironic version of 45:

- 21      *unam* Septimius misellus Acmen  
           *mavult* quam Syrias Britanniasque:  
           *uno* in Septimio fidelis Acme  
           *facit* delicias libidinesque.

Catullus, like Septimius, preferred Lesbia alone to all alternatives; but Lesbia, unlike *fidelis Acme*, preferred all others to him.<sup>72</sup>

Yet the contrasts suggested by such echoes remain muted and elegiac. What then are we to make of the extraordinary obscenity of the end?<sup>73</sup> Commentators either pass over the lines in dignified silence, or indicate their distress. Boissier speaks of "la faute impardonnable de ne pas respecter le passé et de manquer aux égards qu'on doit toujours à une femme qu'on a une fois aimée," and Couat is equally reproachful: "Lesbie avait certainement tout fait pour mériter la colère et les injures d'un amant effrontément trahi, mais c'était à lui d'avoir plus de dignité qu'elle, et de racheter par un généreux oubli les lâchetés de son amour."<sup>74</sup> The chivalry of such verdicts is admirable, but they are not really pertinent. Poem 58 is not simply a valediction upon the affair, rounded off with casual abuse. The blunt vulgarity is surely directed less to Lesbia than to Catullus himself. Only thus may he force upon himself the reality of Lesbia's unfaithfulness: he cannot allow himself to evade it by any circumlocution. It is as though he realized that, in the very act of recalling his love for Lesbia, he was slipping back into it.<sup>75</sup> The sudden *nunc* (4) marks a break more violent than the *nunc* of 72.5, and the contrast between the halves of the poem is rawer. The break between the lingering *l* and *n* sounds of the first three lines and the harsh ugliness of the consonants of the last two measures the break in Catullus' feelings. What 8 accomplished through the alternation of nostalgia and hammering injunctions, or 85 through a bald antithesis, or 72 through elliptical and intricate contrasts, or 76 through echoes and conflation of images, 58 achieves by the manipulation of verbal associations and sound effects. The last line summarizes the poem's movement. The distance between great-hearted Remus and his descendants, Lesbia's present companions, is no greater than that between Lesbia as Catullus once thought of her and the Lesbia he sees now.

The eleventh poem can be seen as a summation of the various techniques used in the "renunciation" poems:



- Furi et Aureli, comites Catulli,  
 sive in extremos penetrabit Indos,  
 litus ut longe resonante Eoa  
 tunditur unda,
- 5     sive in Hyrcanos Arabasve molles,  
       seu Sagas sagittiferosve Parthos,  
       sive quae septemgeminus colorat  
       aequora Nilus,
- 10     sive trans altas gradietur Alpes,  
       Caesaris visens monimenta magni,  
       Gallicum Rhenum horribile aequor ulti-  
       mosque Britannos,
- 15     omnia haec, quaecumque feret voluntas  
       caelitum, temptare simul parati,  
       pauca nuntiate meae puellae  
       non bona dicta.
- 20     cum suis vivat valeatque moechis,  
       quos simul complexa tenet trecentos,  
       nullum amans vere, sed identidem omnium  
       ilia rumpens;
- nec meum respectet, ut ante, amorem,  
       qui illius culpa cecidit velut prati  
       ultimi flos, praetereunte postquam  
       tactus aratro est.

Catullus' relations with Furius and Aurelius remain matter for speculation, and looking back from the vantage point of the last two stanzas it is easy to suspect his apostrophe to them to be tinged with irony.<sup>76</sup> Yet their magniloquent promises nevertheless conjure up a mood of splendid and exotic romance, the *ne plus ultra* of devotion.<sup>77</sup> The grand vista of far-off places moves steadily from East to West, following the sun's path; the sense of space and freedom is almost Aeschylean. The language is that of high rhetoric. Resonant proper names, epithets, Graecisms, and archaisms crowd the stanzas.<sup>78</sup> The pace is stately and measured — in the second stanza it seems almost hymnic — with all the stanzas and a majority of the lines self-contained. At the end of the fourteen-line period we expect some affirmation of solemn devotion — or so, at least, the quasi-imitations and parallels would suggest.<sup>79</sup> But any such expectations are abruptly shattered as the Marlovian roll call sinks into the bare request for *pauca non bona dicta*. The break in mood approximates that in 58. The grandly allusive survey of the known

world seems to suggest, in ironic retrospect, the romantic possibilities of Catullus' and Lesbia's love, while the unadorned language of the penultimate stanza dismisses such possibilities as an illusion. Now the vast expanses of the first four stanzas reappear, but in drastically altered form. No longer are they the measure of Catullus' hopes, but of Lesbia's far-ranging lust. His putative companions, *omnia . . . temptare simul parati*, are transformed to Lesbia's lovers, *quos simul complexa tenet . . . identidem omnium ilia rumpens*. She too is ready to attempt all.

The broken flower of the final stanza represents the same kind of frustrated efflorescence as does the romantic journey that Catullus repudiates. Behind the image lies a homely proverb: "*tam perit quam extrema faba*" in proverbio est, quod ea plerumque aut proteritur aut decerpitur a praetereuntibus (Fest. 363). The change from bean to flower hardly needs explanation; yet it is specifically as well as generally appropriate. At least as early as Sappho the flower had been a stock simile associated with growth, love, and marriage.<sup>80</sup> So Catullus used it in his marriage song (62.39-42):

Ut flos in saeptis secretus nascitur hortis,  
ignotus pecori, nullo convolsus aratro,  
quem mulcent aerae, firmat sol, educat imber;  
multi illum pueri, multae optavere puellae.

The girls' argument is hardly to be taken at face value — *quid tum, si carpunt, tacita quem mente requirunt?* (62.37) — but in *II* the image is reversed and is totally serious. The flower, by an inversion of male and female rôles not uncommon in Catullus,<sup>81</sup> now represents his own love that has in fact been *convolsus aratro*. The girls' argument in 62 is ironically confirmed; love, or at least Lesbia's love, is seen to be brutal and mechanical as a plow: *ilia rumpens*. The image ends by having less to do with love than with destruction, as in the celebrated Homeric simile:

μήκων δ' ὥς ἐτέρωσε κάρη βάλεν, ἥ τ' ἐνὶ κήπῳ,  
καρπῷ βριθομένη νοτίῃσι τε εἰσρινῆσιν,  
ὥς ἐτέρωσ' ἤμυσε κάρη πῆληκι βαρυνθέν.<sup>82</sup>

The stanza epitomizes the tension between possibility and fact that underlies the poem as a whole. Like 58, it conjures up a romantic ideal only to shatter it.

At the same time that the image of the dying flower summarizes the contrasts of the poem it also tends to distance them. The perspective moves us back from the crowded scene of the penultimate stanza, and

recalls the far-away landscape of the first four. But now there is a difference. In place of the reaches of the world, *ultimosque Britannos*, that might have measured the extent of an ideal love, there is a less grandiose expanse: *prati ultimi flos*. The stanza marks a drastic change in moral perspective, an ironic reappraisal of their romance in terms not of what it might have been, but of what in fact it was. Catullus brings himself to recognize that their relationship, far from being universal in scope, unique in intensity, was of only a common or garden variety, destined to die as casually as any flower dies beneath a plow.

If, in its tightly controlled structure, *II* recalls the technique of the epigrams, and if, in its confrontations of idealism and realism, romanticism and vulgarity, it resembles 58, it is like 76 also in its use of echoes from the past. The farewell *vivat valeatque* seems a formal and definitive re-statement of the half-serious *vale*, *puella* (8.12). It gains additional force if we remember the opening line of 5: *vivamus, mea Lesbia, atque amemus*. Their love has come full circle. Where once *vivamus* could have a joint subject, it now defines only a third person; where once it could be followed by a summons to love, it now introduces a gesture of dismissal; where once the verbs could encircle *mea Lesbia*, they are now encircled by *suis moechis*.<sup>83</sup> *Meae puellae* (line 15), Catullus' special term of affection for Lesbia,<sup>84</sup> recalls their whole past together. The intended sarcasm here is clear: Catullus can no more call Lesbia *mea puella* now than any one of her three hundred other lovers. Perhaps also *tenet* (line 17) has a specific reference to the past, acting as an ironic echo of Lesbia's one-time protestations: *Dicebas . . . nec prae me velle tenere Iovem* (72.1-2). The implied contrast between her former words and present deeds would not be foreign, certainly, to the contrast between promises and required action in the opening four stanzas. In line 19, with its emphatic opposition of *nullum* and *omnium*, Catullus corrects the very syntax, as it were, of his love, giving a different version of formulation reached in 58. There, Catullus found that where he preferred Lesbia to all others, she preferred all others to him. Here he realizes that even her feeling for her other lovers amounts to a love for none. He recognizes that *nullum* can be a plural; that he himself is not only one among many, but that all alike are nothing.

But the poem with which *II* invites comparison most obviously is 51. The Sapphic metre, used nowhere except in these two poems, encourages us to make the comparison. (Horace similarly used the lesser Aesclapiadean in the first three books of Odes only for C. 1.1 and C. 3.30. It is not untypical that where Catullus used the technique to give an authoritative seal to his love's end, Horace used it to square off

his *monumentum aere perennius*.)<sup>85</sup> Clearly Catullus is thinking not only of the earlier poem, but of the whole atmosphere surrounding it, of the relatively innocent world from which it sprang. For him to hold the two poems against one another is to view in perspective the whole course of his love. It has been often noticed, too, that Catullus nowhere uses the word *identidem* except in these two poems (51.3; 11.19): in each case the word occupies the same metrical position. Yet it might further be pointed out that the whole change in Catullus' emotional situation can be measured by the change in the word that follows. *Identidem te* (51.3) as against *identidem omnium* (11.19): Catullus' love for Lesbia has been transformed into Lesbia's lust for all others. Finally, even *pauca non bona dicta* may suggest, in inverted form, the mood of 51. Where previously Catullus had been struck dumb by the very sight of Lesbia — *lingua sed torpet* (51.9) — he has now, upon a more considered view, at least a few words to say.

In one poem Catullus reproaches the importunate Ameana for her ignorance of herself: *nec rogare / qualis sit solet aes imaginosum*.<sup>86</sup> In some sense all the poems treated here are designed to be mirrors of a more fundamental sort, artifices in which to recognize certain emotional situations. *Inventa sunt specula ut homo se nosset*:<sup>87</sup> the very number of times Catullus addresses himself by name suggests someone confronting and examining himself. One critic speaks of the *otium* stanza of 51 as being unusual in that it was "penned at some introspective moment,"<sup>88</sup> yet many of the love poems were so penned.<sup>89</sup> The fact that we know so little about Lesbia from the poems is symptomatic, for she is not so much their subject as their condition. They were written less for Lesbia's benefit, or that of the public, than for Catullus' own, and in them the end of communication is secondary to that of discovery and definition — "a clarification of life," as Robert Frost defined poetry: "a momentary stay against confusion."

The same image might be applied, with major qualifications, to some of the longer poems, for they too, to some extent, mirror Catullus' own feelings. The old tendency to "partition Catullus' Muse"<sup>90</sup> has now largely vanished; but even though we are prepared to recognize the same techniques in the longer and shorter poems, we still consider 61–68 as quite distinct in subject. They are, we are reminded, translations, Alexandrine imitations, or poems written for a specific occasion. Yet we must then ask why there should be such a remarkable continuity in subject — all alike, after all, are poems concerned either with happy or unhappy love, whether in terms of marriage (61, 62), castration (63),



mythical lovers (64), historical ones (66), or adultery (67). Poem 68 is of course directly concerned with Catullus' own love, and the ease with which he finds analogues in Protesilaus and Laodamia, or even Zeus and Hera, might make us wonder if we can safely regard the other mythical poems as only impersonal exercises. We need not, of course, go to an extreme and claim the longer poems as in any strict sense allegorical. Yet it is hard to avoid feeling that in the happy pair Manlius and Vinia (61) Catullus could envisage what his relations with Lesbia might have been, or in 64 that he did not feel the situation of Peleus and Thetis, Theseus and Ariadne, to reflect at least some aspects of his own experience of happiness and betrayal.<sup>91</sup>

Certainly, too, the image of a mirror is preferable to that of a skylark or overflowing cauldron if we consider some of the occasional verse, particularly the milder invectives. The burden of many of them is precisely the failure to see oneself as one is; they provide, in a sense, mirrors for fools.

Non oris causa modo homines aequom fuit  
sibi habere speculum ubi os contemplarent suom,  
sed qui perspicere possent cor sapientiae.

(Plautus, *Epid.* 382-84)

Arrius cannot speak without misplacing his aspirates, but Catullus objects not so much to his pronunciation as to the fact that Arrius refuses to see how absurd it is:

et tum mirifice sperabat se esse locutum,  
cum quantum poterat dixerat hinsidias. (84.3-4)

Or there is Egnatius, whose hygienic arrangements bother Catullus less than the fact that Egnatius appears to think them unremarkable, constantly advertising them by his smile (39). So too with Asinius Marrucinus, whose theft of dinner napkins is seen not as a moral failing but as a failure of perception: *hoc salsum esse putas? fugit te, inepte: / quamvis sordida res et invenusta est* (12.4-5). The nameless old man of the Colonia poem is accused in similar terms:

talis iste meus stupor nil videt, nihil audit;  
ipse qui sit, utrum sit an non sit, id quoque nescit.

(20.21-22)

The best example is perhaps Suffenus, a man *venustus et dicax et urbanus* except when he turns his hand to verse, only to reveal the

sibility of a goatherd or ditch-digger. Catullus' reproach is mild, almost speculative. What rouses his wonder is not so much the quality of Suffenus' poetry, but Suffenus' own blindness to it:

... neque idem unquam  
 aequè est beatus ac poema cum scribit:  
 tam gaudet in se tamque se ipse miratur.  
 nimirum idem omnes fallimur, neque est quisquam  
 quem non in aliqua re videre Suffenum  
 possis. suus cuique attributus est error;  
 sed non videmus manticae quod in tergo est. (22.15-21)

The wallet on one's back, concealing one's own faults, is essentially the same image as that of the mirror that Ameana avoids. The last four lines are, for Catullus, practically a philosophical flight, yet they do no more than make explicit a pervasive bias.

In holding a mirror to the social faults of his contemporaries Catullus encountered no real emotional problems, and the verse is, relatively speaking, correspondingly casual. The Lesbia poems, where his engagement is more intense and his intentions less explicit, demanded something more complex. Here Catullus attempts not only to define certain elusive emotional conditions, but also to control them. The kind of control he attempts to exercise varies; but in each case it resides in the form of the poem itself, whether it be through the elegant manipulation of tone and image in 7, the invocation of a literary *persona* in 51 and 8, the strict oppositions of the epigrams, or the intricate contrasts and allusive echoes of 76, 58, and 11. To isolate Catullus' feelings from the form in which he presented them is a mistake. The various artifices Catullus uses are an intrinsic part of his poems' equilibrium. If we removed them we might have a poet closer to the one that critics sometimes seem to desiderate: childlike, simple, and direct. But he would not then have written the poems he did.

It may be true, as Sellar austere observed, that Catullus was "born with the keenest capacities of pleasure and of pain, but he never learned to regulate them."<sup>92</sup> Yet he certainly tried, and his effort to do so is as important in literary terms as his putative failure may have been in biographical ones. The seriousness with which Catullus contemplated himself was something new in Latin literature, and quite different from the elegant poses struck by the writers of the Hellenistic age. Only because of the degree of his commitment to his own feelings did he find it necessary to establish some distance from them. "Poetry," wrote Eliot, "is not a turning loose of emotion, but an escape from emotion;

it is not the expression of personality but an escape from personality. But, of course, only those who have personality and emotions know what it means to want to escape from these things."<sup>93</sup>

## NOTES

1. *Epp.* 1.19.32-33; cf. *C.* 1.1.35; 1.26.10-12; 3.30.13-14; 4.3.13ff. The only other lyric poet Quintilian mentions is Caesius Bassus, who, interestingly enough, seems to have written a tract *De metris*; see H. Bardon, *La littérature latine inconnue*, 2 (Paris 1956) 133. On Horace's claim to be the first lyricist, see J. Ferguson, *AJP* 77 (1956) 1ff.

2. P. Colmant, *LEC* 9 (1940) 418; H. Munro, *Criticisms and Elucidations of Catullus* (Cambridge 1878) 235.

3. J. Wight Duff, *The Literary History of Rome* (London 1953) 239; W. Y. Sellar, *The Roman Poets of the Republic* (Oxford 1905) 413; K. P. Harrington, *Catullus and His Influence* (Norwood 1923) 19; E. M. Blaiklock, *The Romanticism of Catullus* (Auckland 1959) 10.

4. It is unfortunate that, by a kind of literary Gresham's law, the most eloquent protest against this view of Catullus — E. A. Havelock's *Catullus and His Lyric Genius* (Oxford 1939) — is now practically unavailable.

5. *The Three Voices of Poetry* (London 1953) 6.

6. E. T. Merrill, *Catullus* (Cambridge 1893) xix; H. J. Rose, *A Handbook of Latin Literature* (London 1936) 141; J. W. Duff (above, n.3) 236; K. P. Harrington (above, n.3) 27.

7. *Lasarpiciferis* (4), a new coinage, translates *σλφιόφόρος*; and the use of *Libyssae* as an adjective is "rein griechisch" notes W. Kroll, *Catull* (Stuttgart 1929) *ad loc.*

8. The short *y* in *Cyrenis* may be modeled on Callimachus (*H.* 2.73, 94, *Ep.* 20.5, Pf.), since it is normally long in Latin; the only other example of a short *y* seems to be Ps.-Verg., *Catal.* 9.61, itself a reference to Callimachus.

9. *Ep.* 21, 35 (Pf.); cf. *H.* 2.65. Catullus terms Callimachus *Battiades* (65.16; 116.2).

10. T. Birt, *Philol.* 63 (1904) 435; J. P. Elder, *HSCP* 60 (1951) 108; V. Bongi, *Atene e Roma* 10 (1942) 178.

11. J. P. Elder, (above, n.10) 109. The idea gains authority if we remember Catullus' view of Jove: *omnivoli plurima furta Iovis* (68.140). *Aestuosus* can bear such a meaning; cf. *meretricem . . . acerrume aestuosam* (Plaut., *Bacch.* 470ff), and K. F. Quinn in *Critical Essays on Roman Literature*, ed. J. P. Sullivan (London 1962) 60, n.5.

12. *magnificum in usu medicamentisque* (Pliny, *H. N.* 19.38); cf. Pauly-Wiss., *R. E. s. v.* *silphion*; A. C. Moorhouse, *AJP* 74 (1963) 418.

13. L. Herrmann, *Latomus* 16 (1957) 677, would emend *cum tacet nox* to *cum nocet nox*. The line contains one of the very rare emphatic monosyllabic endings in the hendecasyllables, and has a calculated effect which such an emendation would destroy. As it stands, the abrupt ending suggests the sudden "silence" of night; cf. *occidit brevis lux* (5.5).

14. For voluminous references to the two distinct ideas see A. Ramminger, *Motivgeschichtliche Studien zu Catullus Basiagedichten* (Würzburg 1937) 62ff.

The two conceits do not appear to be elsewhere amalgamated; cf. Catullus' use again, 61.206-10.

15. *Vesanus* is almost a technical term for the lover's madness; see R. Pichon, *De sermone amatorio* (Paris 1902) s. v.

16. J. W. Duff (above, n.3) 240.

17. Despite the protest of J. P. Elder, *HSCP* 60 (1951) 101ff.

18. E. V. Marmorale, *l'Ultimo Catullo* (Naples 1957) 30; cf. J. Bayet in *Foundation Hardt, Entretiens II* (Geneva 1956) 21-22.

19. For a detailed discussion of the two poems, with full bibliography, see E. Bickel, *Rhein. Mus.* 89 (1940) 194ff; W. Ferrari, *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa* II, 7 (1938) 59ff; S. Costanza, *Risonanze dell' ode di Saffo* (Messina 1950); L. Ferrero, *Interpretazione di Catullo* (Turin 1955) 161ff. Catullus' addition of *ille, si fas est, superare divos* has occasioned a good deal of discussion of Catullus' religious feelings. Need we see much more here than another example of Catullus' uneasiness with a simple superlative? cf. 13.10; 21.2-3; 22.13-14; 23.12-13; 27.4; 42.14; 49; 82.2-4.

20. "Rather poorly rendered," comments R. Ellis, *Commentary on Catullus* (Oxford 1889) *ad loc.*

21. See Ferrari (above, n.19) 64-65; E. Paratore, *Catullo, poeta doctus* (Catania 1942) 105ff. I. Schnelle, *Untersuchungen zu Catulls Dichterischer Form* (Leipzig 1933) 17ff, comparing the two poems concludes that "Sappho ein lose aufreihendes Gefüge, Catull eine Architektur gibt."

22. A. Couat, *Etude sur Catulle* (Paris 1875) 53; Ferrero (above, n.19) 161; G. Highet, *Poets in a Landscape* (New York 1957) 13.

23. F. A. Wright, *Three Roman Poets* (London 1953) 133.

24. J. P. Elder (above, n.10) 108.

25. L. P. Wilkinson in *Foundation Hardt, Entretiens II* (Geneva 1956) 47.

26. T. Frank, *Catullus and Horace* (New York 1928) 107.

27. John Donne, "The Triple Foole." It is interesting to remember that Theocritus' eleventh Idyll, one line (72) of which is often cited as a precedent for the kind of reversal displayed in the *otium* stanza of 51, is as a whole a praise of the sovereign powers of song to relieve the pangs of love.

28. W. Ferrari (above, n.19) 59ff; E. Paratore (above, n.21) 105ff; V. Sirago, *Catullo* (Arona, 1947), 28-29.

29. Valerius Aedituus, 275, 1 (Baehrens); cf. Cat. 35.14-15; 45.15-16.

30. Though see the persuasive arguments of R. Lattimore, *CP* 39 (1944) 184ff.

31. Cf. W. S. Landor, *Foreign Quarterly Review* 29 (1842) 354: "This Ode ends, and always ended, with *lumina nocte*." For references to other editors defending that view see R. Ellis, *Catullus, ad loc.* It has been shared more recently by R. Avallone, *Antiquitas* 6-7 (1951-52) 49; L. P. Wilkinson (above, n.25) 47; C. J. Fordyce, *Catullus* (Oxford 1961) *ad loc.*

32. E. Kalinka, *Wiener Eranos* (Vienna 1909) 157ff; O. Immisch, *Sitz. Heid. Akad. der Wiss.* (1933) 14, following Kalinka, suggests that Lesbia may have had an "etwas mütterlich" affection for her young lover. This hardly accords with the Lesbia we know from Catullus, not to mention from Cicero.

33. E. Bickel, *Rhein. Mus.* 89 (1940) 205ff.

34. T. Birt, *Philol.* 63 (1904) 436.

35. W. Ferrari (above, n.19) 69ff.

36. P. Giuffrida, *L'epicureismo nella letteratura latina* II (Turin 1950) 246ff.



37. A. Barigazzi, *Reale Istituto Lombardo di Sc. e Lettere, Classe di Lettere*, 75 (1941-42) 424.

38. Ferrari (above, n.19) 70.

39. The definition is that of R. Lattimore, *CP* 39 (1944) 186. For the vexed question as to whether *ille* (1-2) represents Catullus or some more favored rival (even Metellus has been proposed), see the bibliography given by H. J. Leon, *CW* 53 (1959-60) 146. Such a debate as to whether the poem is one of love or jealousy is perhaps overly schematic: need the two be that distinct? Surely *ille* designates anyone, whether Catullus or some other, fortunate enough to be Lesbia's even momentary partner. Catullus' feelings (cf. *nam*, 6) are both proof and justification of his opening statement.

40. F. Doering, *C. Val. Catulli Carmina* (London 1820) *ad loc.*

41. It is clear too that in picturing Lesbia's coming loneliness Catullus is thinking as much of his own case as of hers; *tu* (14) at first might almost be taken as a resumption of his second-person address to himself. I find improbable the notion of A. Baehrens, *Catulli Veronensis Liber* (Leipzig 1885) *ad loc.*, that Catullus is thinking of the social ostracism Lesbia will suffer because of being suspected of poisoning her husband.

42. For the erotic connotations of *iocosa* see Hor., *Epp.* 1.6.65; Ovid, *A. A.* 3.580, 796; cf. Cat. 62.47; 68.16; 109.1.

43. E. Fraenkel, *JRS* 51 (1961) 52-53, notes the remarkable lack of enjambment in the poem: "the poet's determination appears to be adamant, and adamant is the form." On the structure of 8 see also R. A. Swanson, *CJ* 58 (1963) 193ff.

44. *Candidi* surely has more personal associations than a mere reference to λευκή ἡμέρα indicates. Cf. the description of Lesbia as *candida diva* (68.70) or *lux mea* (68.132); cf. 68.133-34, 148; 107.6. See also J. Ferguson, *Greece and Rome* III (1956) 54.

45. R. Y. Tyrrell, *Latin Poetry* (Boston 1895) 103; T. Frank (above, n.26) 57. Cf. H. Rebert, *CJ* 26 (1931) 287: "the soliloquy of an impetuous, ingenuous youth."

46. On the colloquialisms (*ibi*, *miser vive*, *nulla*, *vae te*) and conversational style of the language (most of the parallels cited are from Plautus) see W. Kroll, *Catull, ad loc.*, and A. Ronconi, *Atena e Roma* VI (1938) 145ff. *Dolebis*, *rogabit*, *iocosa*, *volt*, *adibit*, *bella*, *amabis*, *basiabis*, and *labella* are almost technical words in amatory poetry; see R. Pichon, *De sermone amatorio* (Paris 1902) *s.v.*

47. See Plautus, *Truc.* 759ff; *Bacc.* 500ff; Terence, *Eun.* 46ff (*nunc ego/et illam scelestam esse et me miserum sentio . . .*). The last was familiar enough to be parodied by Horace (*S.* 2.3.257ff). Cf. also *Anth. Pal.* 5.23; Hor., *Ep.* 15; Prop., 2.5; Ovid, *Am.* 3.11.

48. E. P. Morris, *Trans. Conn. Acad. of Arts and Sciences* 15 (1909) 150, 147. His interpretation has been followed, with further references, by A. L. Wheeler, *Catullus and the Traditions of Ancient Poetry* (Berkeley 1934) 229ff; so also H. Comfort, *CP* 24 (1929) 181: "The poet was following a recognized genre in writing, for his amusement and Lesbia's." W. Heidle, *TAPA* 31 (1900) xxxix, points out the parallel between Cat., 8.10, and Sappho, frg. 1.21, which he thinks indicates that Catullus believes Lesbia will return to him. We might remember the scazon's traditional association with satiric verse.

49. Cf. V. E. Frankl: "Humor is a weapon in the mind's struggle for self-preservation . . . Humor is possibly the best means by which a human being can

effect indifference and rise above his situation if . . . only for a few seconds." Quoted by R. A. Swanson (above, n.43) 196.

50. E. V. Marmorale, *l'Ultimo Catullo* (Naples 1957) 52.

51. Cf. J. Svennung, *Catulls Bildersprache* (Uppsala 1945) 19ff; A. L. Wheeler (above, n.43) 47-48.

52. G. Luck, *The Latin Love Elegy* (London 1959) 50.

53. The comment of H. J. Rose (above, n.6) 141 on 85 is worth remembering: "... two lines which have nothing to distinguish them from prose save their metre and their supreme poetry."

54. Cf. Anacreon, 89 (Dhl.), Theognis, 1091 (Dhl.); *Anth. Pal.* 5.24; 5.25; Terence, *Eun.* 70ff; other examples in O. Weinreich, *Die Distichen des Catull* (Tübingen 1926) 49ff.

55. Cf. E. A. Havelock (above, n.4) 135ff; O. Weinreich (above, n.54) 2ff; 33ff; R. Reitzenstein, P.-W. R.-E. s. v. Epigramm, VI col. 77ff.

56. R. Graves, *The Crowning Privilege* (New York 1956) 191.

57. *Ibid.* 192.

58. On the distinction in meaning of *amare* and *bene velle* see F. Copley, *AJP* 70 (1949) 22ff. On the structure of 72, see I. Schnelle, *Untersuchungen zu Catulls Dichterischer Form* (Leipzig 1933) 32ff; F. Stoessl, *Wien. Stud.* 70 (1957) 300ff.

59. Cf. 61.187; Prop., 2.29.33; Ovid, *Her.* 6.133; Tac., *H.* 4.44; *Thes. Ling. Lat.* 3, 1503, 83. "Know" has the same ambiguity in Elizabethan English.

60. Compare the same kind of shift in meaning in 8 from *ducas* (2) to *ducebat* (4), contrasting present knowledge with the physical excitement of the past.

61. Ellis, *Catullus, ad loc.*; M. Lenchantin de Gubernatis, *Il Libro di Catullo* (Turin 1953) *ad loc.*

62. Livy, 26.22.15; 33.11.10; Tac., *H.* 4.80.

63. A. L. Wheeler, *AJP* 36 (1915) 166ff; E. Paludan, *Classica et Mediaevalia* IV (1941) 208ff.

64. I.e., where a similarity in words indicates an actual (to Lucretius) similarity in substance; see P. Friedlander, *AJP* 62 (1941) 16ff.

65. Even O. Friess, *Beobachtungen über die Darstellungskunst Catulls* (Würzburg 1929), who makes much of the balances and correspondences in the poems, can only suggest a "Prinzip der Asymmetrie" here (41).

66. For a summary of the various interpretations see A. Traina, *Convivium* I (1954) 361ff; H. Leon (above, n.39) 178-79.

67. *Letters of Edna St. Vincent Millay*, ed. A. R. MacDougall (New York 1952) 333.

68. For details as to awkward elisions (9, 11, 25), breaking of the normal couplet progress (10), and prosaic language, see Kroll, *Catull, ad loc.*

69. The rare spondaic ending (15) emphasizes the hammering insistence of the language.

70. See especially R. M. Henry, *Hermathena* 75 (1950) 63ff; 76 (1950) 48ff.

71. See also J. Ferguson (above, n.44) 55ff.

72. There may be a loaded reference in *suos omnes* (2); no such comparison occurs in other very similar lines (cf. 8.5; 37.12; 68.160; 87.1). Might there be a suggestion here, remembering Lesbia's apparently notorious relations with her brother, that Lesbia, unlike Catullus, prefers her relatives to her lover? cf. 79.

73. On the elusive meaning of *glubii* (5) see Kroll, *Catull, ad loc.* It is noteworthy that Marmorale should change his description of 58 as "una delle perle

più delicate della poesia catulliana" (*l'Ultimo Catullo* [Naples 1952] 26) to "una delle cose più lancinanti" (*ibid.* [Naples 1957] 40).

74. G. Boissier, as quoted by E. Fraenkel, *JRS* 45 (1955) 5; A. Couat, *Etude sur Catulle* (Paris 1875) 71.

75. Cf. Horace, *C.* 4.13.13ff, where the elegiac regret for Lyce is broken off by a description of her as an aging crow.

76. For references to arguments over whether Catullus' address is serious or rather a parody of the high style, see W. Ferrero, *Catullo* (Turin 1955) 446; H. Leon (above, n.39) 144.

77. Cf. E. A. Havelock (above, n.4) 128.

78. The tone is almost epic; *caelitus* is from Ennius (*ap.* Varro, *L. L.* 6.7); 3-4 seem to be modeled on the Homeric πολύφλοιστος θάλασσα. *Sagittiferos* (6) and *septemgeminus* (7) appear to be new coinages, the latter perhaps modeled on Aeschylus' ἐπτάρροος (fr. 300); cf. App. Rh., 4.269. See Kroll, *Catull.*, *ad loc.*

79. Cf. Horace, *C.* 2.6.1ff; 3.4.29ff.; *Ep.* 1.11ff; Prop., 1.6.1ff; Statius, 3.5. Hor., *C.* 1.22.17ff, though a parody, represents the same rhetorical device.

80. Fragment 100 (Lobel and Page). Though the attribution to Sappho has been questioned, the image is in any case a traditional one; for other examples see J. Svennung (above, n.50) 73ff.

81. Cf. 2a; 68.135ff.

82. Hom., *Il.* 8.306ff; cf. Verg., *A.* 9.435 (which seems to be influenced by Cat. 11 also); cf. *A.* 11.68.

83. For similar uses of *vivo* cf. 68.160; 107.7. Catullus combines the two verbs only once elsewhere: *Gellius est tenuis: quid ni? cui tam bona mater/tamque valens vivat* (89.1-2).

84. Cf. 2.1; 3.3; 3.4; 13.11; 36.2.

85. Cf. Verg., *E.* 1.1 and *G.* 4.566.

86. 41.7-8. I use the reading of the Oxford text; for discussion see R. Ellis, *Catullus*, *ad loc.*; C. J. Fordyce, *Catullus*, *ad loc.*

87. Seneca, *Nat. Quaest.* 1.17.4. The image of literature as a mirror was familiar; for references see E. R. Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages* (New York 1953) 336; J. F. Callahan, *CP* 59 (1964) 6ff.

88. K. P. Harrington (above, n.3) 41.

89. "The girl whose boy-friend starts writing her love poems should be on her guard. Perhaps he really does love her, but one thing is certain: while he was writing his poems he was not thinking of her but of his own feelings about her, which is suspicious." — W. H. Auden, "Squares and Oblongs," in Arnheim, Auden, Shapiro, Stauffer, *Poets at Work* (New York 1948) 175.

90. E. A. Havelock (above, n.4) 76.

91. J. Ferguson (above, n.44) 56ff points out the way in which 61 uses phrases from the Lesbia poems, and M. C. J. Putnam, *HSCP* 65 (1961) 165ff, shows how in 64 Catullus' feelings for both Lesbia and his brother emerge from the description of the mythical lovers.

92. W. Y. Sellar (above, n.3) 409.

93. T. S. Eliot, *The Sacred Wood* (London 1953) 58.

## A ROMAN TERRACOTTA FIGURINE OF THE EPHESIAN ARTEMIS IN THE McDANIEL COLLECTION\*

BY JOHN RANDOLPH COLEMAN III

THROUGH the Alice Corinne McDaniel Fund, the Department of Classics, Harvard University, has acquired from Hesperia Art, Philadelphia, a Roman terracotta figurine of the Ephesian Artemis (Plate I).<sup>1</sup> The figure of the goddess is standing in a niche; she is flanked by two stags, whose heads, necks, and antlers protrude outside the niche. The piece is 0.24 m. high.

The figure follows the model of the Ephesian Artemis. Her body is cylindrical, although it tapers toward the feet which are hidden in the circling end-folds of the chiton which spreads out on the floor of the niche. The short, rather stubby arms, attached to the body at the elbows, reach outside the niche and end in a pair of flat hands which are open as if holding objects that are now missing. The nimbus, or halo, of the goddess flanks her head on the right and left. The original motif for the halo was the veil worn by women over the head, and here its derivation becomes obvious. It seems to extend down along the sides of the figure under the elbows, in the manner of a long veil. Above the head, rising out of the halo, is a large cylindrical headdress, called a kalathos, which swells in diameter at the very top.<sup>2</sup> On the front of the goddess are numerous little pellets concentrated at the chest level in a grape-cluster arrangement and extending down almost to the feet. These are usually interpreted as the breasts of Artemis.

Attached to the goddess at knee level are two stags, one on the right and one on the left. The rear legs of the stag to her left are missing. This stag is attached at the shoulders to the edge of the niche — the other, by both the shoulders and front legs. Each animal has its outer front leg placed in front of the other, although the legs are not separated. The antlers are indicated by a vertical incised line with short horizontal incisions on either side. The head of the left-hand stag was broken off and subsequently mended. The eyes, nose, and jaw of each animal are indicated.

\* Plates II, III, and IV are reproduced here through the courtesy of Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen.



The features of the goddess are cursorily modeled. The nose and forehead are prominent, while the other features are barely discernible. The mouth seems fixed in a smile. The whole figure gives a solid and regal appearance, although the head is somewhat dwarfed by the huge halo and kalathos.

The clay has been baked to a tannish-brown color. It was originally covered by a white slip, much of which has worn off. The front of the halo was originally painted black; some of this pigment remains. The parts of the group — the niche and its hollow base, the stags and the goddess — seem to have been fashioned separately and then assembled and fired as a whole. The arms of the figure also appear to have been made separately. At the top of the kalathos there is an opening which shows that the figurine was hollow-molded in two halves which were then joined. The figures are fastened to the niche only at the floor.

Between the front legs of the stags are two holes pierced through the bottom of the niche. They must have secured the two staffs (*vittae*) which the goddess once held in her half-opened hands, but which are now missing. These staffs may have been of wood or of a material other than clay.

This terracotta group is readily identified as one depicting the Ephesian Artemis. The huge kalathos and halo, the tapering body in upright frontal position with its multitude of small breasts, the outstretched arms and the flanking arrangement of the two stags, are the most compelling evidence. The Ephesian Artemis was of Asiatic origin, a Greek adoption of an indigenous Asian goddess.<sup>3</sup> Her shape and posture, her costume and the position of the stags at her feet, are commonly believed to stem from ancient Anatolian and Near Eastern motifs.<sup>4</sup>

There are comparable terracottas of this goddess, although possibly no other in which she is placed in a niche. A figurine in the Louvre (Plate II a)<sup>5</sup> shows her, without arms and feet, covered systematically from the middle of the kalathos to the bottom of the legs with little round bumps, which are the entire decoration.<sup>6</sup> Such a degeneration of individual decorative elements is probably one stage later in date than such careful work as the terracotta from Klazomenai now at Geneva (Plate II b),<sup>7</sup> and again a stage earlier than the McDaniel terracotta, which has no recognizable *ependytes* and only a cluster of tiny breasts along the upper chest.<sup>8</sup>

That the decoration on the McDaniel Artemis is a decadent form of the traditional decorative motifs of the Ephesian Artemis is evident upon examination of two statues of the goddess, one in the Museo



PLATE I. Terracotta Artemis in the McDaniel Collection, Harvard University.



PLATE IIa.  
Terracotta Artemis in the Louvre.



PLATE IIb.  
Terracotta Artemis in Geneva.



PLATE IIIa. Statue of Artemis in Naples.



PLATE IIIb. Statue of Artemis in Athens.





PLATE IV. Engraving of a lamp showing Artemis.

Nazionale at Naples (Plate III a)<sup>9</sup> and the other in the National Museum at Athens (Plate III b).<sup>10</sup> The Naples statue, of bronze and alabaster, shows her in her usual columnar posture but with the different types of ornament, particularly the breasts and *ependytes*, distinctly separate from one another. On the marble statue at Athens, the breasts are carved in a triangular arrangement extending down to the hips and into the griffin decoration of the *ependytes*, which is clearly lacking its usual rectangular patterns of horizontal and vertical field-dividers. The Athens Artemis is dated by Hermann Thiersch as post-Hadrianic, or mid-second century A.D.<sup>11</sup>

The placing of the goddess in a niche is unique among known terracottas. The idea may have developed from the common practice of placing statues under arches or pediments supported by columns. A class of sarcophagi has been found in Roman cities, especially those of Asia Minor, on the sides of which divinities and human figures in high relief, in standing or sitting positions, are shown in columned niches.<sup>12</sup>

An engraving in an Italian book on lamps published in 1691 shows a Roman clay lamp then extant (Plate IV).<sup>13</sup> This affords the complete design, although with some adjustments, as it was presented by the McDaniel Artemis. On the discus of the lamp the goddess is holding away from her body the two *vittae*, inside of which stand the two stags. The motif of the goddess holding the *vittae* with two stags beside her is a very common one. It has been found on other Roman lamps, such as one at the Wallraf-Richartz Museum in Cologne,<sup>14</sup> on bronze objects such as a bronze plate formerly on the art market in Rome,<sup>15</sup> on votive stelai such as two at the Rijksmuseum in Leiden,<sup>16</sup> and on numerous Imperial Roman coins<sup>17</sup> and gems.<sup>18</sup> In all these examples there are minor variations in the placement of the stags, the angle of the *vittae*, and the position of Artemis' arms; the over-all composition, however, does not change.

It is difficult to establish when and where the McDaniel terracotta was made. The interesting and highly original niche-composition hints that it may be the work of an artisan perhaps outside of, or not directly controlled by, the main traditions of terracotta workshops in Ephesos and Asia Minor. The rather cursory, crude modeling and workmanship of the piece would strengthen the opinion that its artist belonged to a provincial, non-Asiatic school, perhaps from southern Italy, in the middle or late second century A.D.

## NOTES

1. *Hesperia Art, Bulletin* n.27 (2219 St. James Street, Philadelphia, Penn. 1963); Fogg Museum TL 14634. I am indebted to Dr. David G. Mitten, of the Department of Fine Arts, and Professor Mason Hammond, of the Department of Classics, for encouraging me to publish this terracotta figurine. The photograph of this figurine for Plate I was taken by the photographer of the Fogg Museum, Harvard University.

2. The headdress, or kalathos, was worn not only by the Ephesian Artemis but also by her priests and priestesses, as shown by small archaic ivory figurines found in the Artemision in Ephesos; David George Hogarth, *The Archaic Artemisia* (London 1908) pp. 157-58, 160-61; pl. XXIV 1a, 1b, 7, 11. The kalathos was also a common ornament of other Asian divinities such as Cybele (Ekrem Akurgal, *Die Kunst Anatoliens von Homer bis Alexander* [Berlin 1961] p. 97 and figs. 60, 61) and the Aphrodite of Aphrodisias; Hermann Thiersch, *Ependytes und Ephod* (Stuttgart 1936) pp. 60, 65, and pl. VIII I.

3. Ephesos was one of the original twelve cities of Ionia, settled by the Greeks who migrated to Asia Minor during the Dark Ages. It is believed that the Greeks found already established there an Asian "mother" goddess, whom they identified with Artemis. See Karl Hoenn, *Artemis* (Zurich 1946) 55.

4. The inverted conical shape of the goddess may be derived from South Mesopotamian models. The "breasts" seem to be an original Ephesian motif. The *ependytes* (see below, n.8), which is missing on the McDaniel Artemis but which can be seen encasing the legs of the Naples Artemis (see below, n.9 and Plate III a), has been traced back to Syria. The motif of the two flanking stags derives from ancient southern Anatolian models. For the kalathos, see above, n.2. For a general discussion see Thiersch, *Ependytes* pp. 1-53.

5. Hermann Thiersch, *Artemis Ephesia eine archäologische Untersuchung: I, Katalog der erhaltenen Denkmäler*, in *Abhandlungen der Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, Phil.-hist. Klasse, Dritte Folge* Nr. 12 (Berlin 1935; hereafter referred to as Thiersch, *Artemis Ephesia*) p. 62 and pls. XL 3-4. Plate XL 4 of the Louvre Artemis is here reproduced as Plate II a.

6. Although this terracotta figurine is somewhat worn and the details are further obscured, it is clear that the different iconographical details (the animals on the kalathos, halo, and *ependytes*) were originally conceived and executed as nothing more than "little round bumps," as certainly was the case with the breasts. The only exceptions are the garland and the acorn necklace about the throat.

7. Thiersch, *Artemis Ephesia* pp. 58-59 and pl. XLI 1-2. Plate XLI 2 of the Geneva Artemis from Klazomenai is here reproduced as Plate II b.

8. The *ependytes* (see above, n.4) is the encasing of the body of the goddess between the hips and the feet by a tight, gently tapering field of horizontal and vertical lines forming rectangular panels, in each of which is an iconographical symbol in relief. The *ependytes* was also worn by the Aphrodite of Aphrodisias and Jupiter Heliopolitanus. See Thiersch, *Ependytes* (above, n.2) pp. 59-98 and pls. IX, X, XII, XVI-XIX.

9. Thiersch, *Artemis Ephesia* pp. 17-20 and pls. I-III 1-2. Plate I of the Naples Artemis is here reproduced as Plate III a.



10. *Ibid.* p. 2 and pls. XVIII-XXIX 1-2. Plate XXVIII of the Athens Artemis is here reproduced as Plate III b.

11. *Ibid.*

12. Charles Rufus Morey, *Sardis* vol. V, pt. I: *The Sarcophagus of Claudia Antonia Sabina and the Asiatic Sarcophagi* (Princeton 1924) 21-28, 79-89. Morey considers the Asiatic sarcophagi to be of two distinct types, one originating from Lydia, the other from Sidamara, both of which became popular in the Western Empire as well as in the East (pp. 27-28). The earliest of the Asiatic sarcophagi is dated at A.D. 160 (p. 89).

13. Thiersch, *Artemis Ephesia* pp. 62-63 and pl. XLIII 2. Plate XLIII 2 reproduces an engraving from Bartoli-Bellori, *Le Lucerne antiche sepolcrali figurate* (Rome 1691) and is in turn reproduced here as Plate IV. On p. 62 under no. 52, Thiersch states that the present location of the lamp in question is not known; following Loeschcke, he regards it as of eastern manufacture, dating from the first half of the second century A.D.

14. *Ibid.* p. 63 and pl. XLIII 1; dated to the second half of the second century A.D. by Kisa.

15. *Ibid.* pp. 64-65 and pl. XLV 2.

16. *Ibid.* p. 67 and pl. XLIV; dated to the second century A.D. Also p. 68 and pl. XLV 1; dated to the second century A.D.

17. *Ibid.* pp. 78-85 and pls. XLIX-LI.

18. *Ibid.* pp. 69-78 and pls. XLVII-XLVIII.





THE TRAGEDY OF THE *HIPPOLYTUS*:  
THE WATERS OF OCEAN AND THE UNTOUCHED  
MEADOW<sup>1</sup>

*In Memoriam Arthur Darby Nock*

BY CHARLES P. SEGAL

THE clash of human will and divine power is basic to the tragic sense of Greek drama. Not only may the gods serve to set the tragic action into motion, but they may themselves embody its meaning. As this meaning usually involves some of the most complex and difficult issues of human life, so the nature of the gods and their mode of acting upon the human world are often puzzling and full of real or apparent contradictions or hard, painful truths.

The *Hippolytus* has its full share of these difficulties. The human motivation in the play is totally comprehensible and satisfying in itself;<sup>2</sup> yet the gods, Aphrodite in the prologue, Artemis in the epilogue, have significant dramatic, as well as thematic, rôles. Their function in the play has often been explained by the claim that Euripides uses them to attack the anthropomorphic religion.<sup>3</sup> While certainly true to some extent, this explanation does not account for the meaning of the play as a whole or for the substantial independence of the human action, which is yet interwoven with the opposed natures and wills of the two goddesses.

As will appear, it is largely through imagery that these gods are bound into the poetic fabric of the play. Through certain recurrent images of the natural world, notably that of the sea, their power is presented as an effective reality acting upon the human world. The imagery thus leads back to the gods and to the broader issues which their natures and actions raise. Thus, however critically Euripides may have regarded the gods of the traditional religion, he can use them poetically and dramatically to enlarge the scope of the tragedy<sup>4</sup> and to extend its meaning beyond the inward struggles of the protagonists to the questions of man's relation to the order (or disorder) of the universe.<sup>5</sup>

The powers of the universe, the objective demands of man's world upon him, the forces of nature to which he is subject: these are central issues in the play. From their origins the Greek gods stand in close

connection with these natural powers, and hence through them Euripides can state these broad themes and conflicts without losing dramatic or poetic vividness.<sup>6</sup> He exploits these connections most fully in linking the power of Aphrodite, as it acts throughout the play, with the force of the sea. As an image of the unfolding violence of Aphrodite's power, the sea becomes also a symbol for the demanding realities of the world—which are the gods.

Aphrodite, born from the sea, has all its irrational elementality. She is, as Seneca describes her in his *Phaedra* (274), the goddess *non miti generata ponto*. The imagistic significance of the sea, with its focal position for other images and themes in the play, is a natural outgrowth of the goddess' own nature and the forces with which the Greek mind, in its mythical formulations, had always associated her.

Euripides' imagery, therefore, does not become arbitrary or artificial, a forced or self-conscious literary device, but remains intimately related to a deeply rooted, age-old perception, already stated in poetic or proto-poetic form, about the nature of the love-goddess and the love force. Here, as often in classical Greek poetry, the poet finds himself aided in his individual creation by the crystallization of traditional experience and perception in the myth. The myth may thus not only give the poet the general content of plot, characters, setting, and so on, but also, as it seems to do here, may suggest his basic images, his underlying poetic structure.

The relevance of Aphrodite's connection with the sea has, of course, been noted before, and is well stated by Norwood: "In her might and relentless cruelty there dwells 'something of the sea' that gave her birth and across which Phaedra, dogged by her unseen curse, voyaged from Crete." And again: "Aphrodite, the Sea-Queen, wonderful and ruthless like the ocean, bringing joy or grief with indifferent hands."<sup>7</sup> My purpose, however, is to show how the imagery of the sea and related images operate structurally throughout the tragedy, formed as it is under the shadow of the sea-born, sea-wild goddess; and how this imagery underlies the unity of the play and deepens the dimensions and intensity of the tragic action.<sup>8</sup>

It would be mistaken to regard Aphrodite, that jealous, all too human female, as a symbolical figure and nothing else. Yet she obviously signified to Euripides and his audience a great natural force, the instinctive sexual drive in all its relentless power. In this aspect, she is *Kypris*, and is so referred to in the play almost to the exclusion of the more general name, Aphrodite, which occurs, in fact, only three times (532, 539, 765). She had been so treated explicitly in Aeschylus'

*Danaids*; and she recurs, in an unknown play of Euripides, as the authoress of the love and commingling of earth and sky, on which all life depends (frag. 898).<sup>9</sup>

Her terrible ambiguity lies in the fact that she is not only a power of the natural world, but is in a sense also within man: she is that part of him which responds instinctively to the elemental forces in nature and obeys, spontaneously, the same impulses as the animals, as earth and sky. Here through Aphrodite, as through Dionysus in the *Bacchae*, the external and internal aspects of human reality interpenetrate. It is this double aspect of Aphrodite, fused symbolically in the sea, which creates the fullness of the tragedy in the *Hippolytus*: on the one hand, a psychological tragedy, the result of man's futile attempt to suppress a basic part of his nature; and, on the other hand, a tragedy of human helplessness before divine power. In other terms, the tragedy juxtaposes man as a part of nature, a creature among creatures, and man as a sentient being with a will and an inner life. Aphrodite, whose reality is both biological and psychological, enforces the tragic linking of these two basic parts of the human condition. Her power is exercised both internally and externally; and in both aspects she is, like the sea, irresistible.<sup>10</sup>

These two aspects of Aphrodite correspond to the two-fold nature of her dramatic rôle. She appears in the prologue as part of the "external" reality, an actor in the tragedy; and so she is spoken of in the exodos, In between, however, she is half "real," half metaphorical, a force rather than a person. Thus, as the action moves to the purely human sphere, her "reality" becomes internal rather than external. The same ambiguity is present in her status as a god. As part of external reality, she is indeed a god, an actor who affects his environment in tangible, concrete ways. Yet as an internal force, an instinctive drive pervading all of nature, she is "something greater than a god" (360). It is interesting that in introducing herself she does not say "I am a god," but "I am called a god," θεὰ κέκλημαι (line 2), not θεά εἰμι. Even her rôle as a *dramatis persona* is not free from this ambiguity, for as Norwood has well noted, she is more removed from the immediate action than Artemis, though paradoxically the cause of it all;<sup>11</sup> and, unlike Artemis, she does not address directly any of her victims, or indeed any human character.

Thus the sea, in its vastness, power, inscrutability, helps expand her significance beyond the anthropomorphic figure so objectionable to modern critics<sup>12</sup> into an invincible eternal force. And, as imaged in the sea, this force appears as a surd, pre-existing human nature and human



questioning, and impenetrable to human reason. Aphrodite, like the sea, *is*.

The ambiguity of the sea too makes it an apt symbol for the complexity of Aphrodite's position and her action upon the human characters, for as Euripides and other Greek poets present it, it possesses the extremes of beauty when calm and of destructive power when disturbed.<sup>13</sup>

The symbolic dimensions thus conferred upon the gods are especially important for Euripides. Because of the problematical position in which he places his gods, he needs such active symbols perhaps more than a poet who simply accepts the traditional religion. In an age of growing skepticism and rationalism, these symbolic counterparts of the gods are, at one level, perhaps more "real" and "true" to him than the actual anthropomorphic figures.

Within the *Hippolytus* itself, the sea has several levels of significance, not always easily separable: (1) in purely literal terms, the sea is a simple physical element, neutral in itself, but, like all aspects of the physical world, potentially destructive. The sea in this aspect has also a historical reality: associations with the past, as the sea which Phaedra crossed from Crete. (2) On the mythical level the sea is connected with powerful divinities, Aphrodite and Poseidon; it is the sphere ruled over by gods whose power is active in human affairs. At this level the inert matter of the physical world becomes potent with divine, often sinister force. (3) The sea, detached by one step from its gods, becomes symbolic of the unfathomable forces that course through the universe and human life. Its effectiveness as a symbol lies partly in the fact that its scope is without precisely definable limits. It can be viewed, for example, psychologically or metaphysically. Its range is as wide as the scope of the tragedy itself.

The range of the play's significance is established in the opening lines:

Powerful and not without name, I am called the goddess Kypris, both among mortals and in the heavens; and all who look on the light of the sun and dwell within the ocean Pontos and the limits of Atlas — those who revere my power I put first in honor and those who think big toward me I trip up (1-6).

It includes mortals and heaven (1-2), the sea and the sun (3-4). Aphrodite, the sea-born goddess, defines in terms of the sea the boundaries of the mortal realm over which she has power: "Those who dwell within the ocean Pontos and the limits of Atlas" (*Πόντον τερμόνων τ' Ἀτλ-*

αντικῶν) (3). The human world is placed between two seas, and in the following action the sea will well up and destroy a representative portion of the human world it surrounds. What here only marks the geographical limits of human life will soon play an active part in its substance. The course of the action can be followed in terms of the advance of the sea; and because the outcome is known beforehand the power of the destroying element is the more terrible and its release the more inevitable.

Aphrodite's prologue, in stating the situation, states also the basic opposition between herself and Hippolytus in terms of the sea. The "pale-green woods" (χλωρὰν δ' ἄν' ὕλην, 17) wherein the youth associates with his virgin goddess (παρθένῳ)<sup>14</sup> are a foil for the darkness of the surging sea. The instrument of his destruction will be the woman whom Theseus transported across the sea (ναυστολεῖ, 36); and the vengeance will be completed in the destructive aspect of the sea that belongs to Poseidon "the sea lord" (ὁ πόντιος ἄναξ, 44-45; see Πόντου, 3). The sea is thus at once associated with the female passion of Aphrodite (and Phaedra) and the male anger and violence of Poseidon (and Theseus). In both these aspects it will overwhelm the devotee of the virgin woodland goddess.

In the first lines, Aphrodite speaks of her power in the heavens (οὐρανοῦ τ' ἔσω, 2) as well as on earth; but Hippolytus enters, in a dramatic contrast, immediately after the prologue, singing of "the heavenly (οὐρανίαν) daughter of Zeus, Artemis" (59-60). The contrast is sharpened by the hunters' chorus (61ff) which takes up his prayer and, though praising Artemis, blithely echoes parts of Aphrodite's sinister speech:<sup>15</sup>

. . . ὦ κόρα

Λατοῦς Ἀρτεμι καὶ Διός, [cf. "Ἀρτεμιν, Διὸς κόρην, 15]

καλλίστα πολὺν παρθένων [cf. παρθένῳ, 17],

ἃ μέγαν κατ' οὐρανὸν [cf. οὐρανοῦ τ' ἔσω, 2]

ναίεις [cf. ναίουσιν, 4] εὐπατέρειαν αὐ- / λάν . . .

(64-69)

As Aphrodite is here juxtaposed with Artemis, so sea is opposed to sky, and the latter, as will be seen, appears throughout the play as a place of futile escape, until it too is finally touched by the sea that destroys Hippolytus (κῦμ' οὐρανῷ στήριζον, 1207).

Hippolytus' first significant speech (73-87) develops the theme of his purity and devotion to his pure goddess. The untouched garden from which he offers her the wreath is a familiar symbol of chastity (see *Song*

of *Songs* 4:12: "A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse"; also Catullus 11.22ff: *velut prati ultimi flos* . . .). The gift of the crown "from an untouched meadow" is a symbolic offering of his sexuality to the virgin goddess, a concrete embodiment of the offer which he makes every day of his life. This scene thus presents a symbolical enactment of Hippolytus' whole way of life, and it does so in terms of the pure woodland to which Aphrodite had referred bitterly in her prologue (17). This sheltered woodland, however, will soon encounter the violent sea. The bee of spring which goes around it (77) will recur as the sign of the ever-present Kypris (563).<sup>16</sup> The *aidos* which waters this "untouched meadow" with the moisture of its rivers (ποταμίαισι κηπεύει δρόσοις, 78) will reappear shortly as a motive force in the mind of the passion-filled, Kypris-swayed Phaedra (see 385ff).<sup>17</sup> Even the adjective "untouched" (ἀκήρατος, 73, 76) will be flung bitterly back at Hippolytus, accused of unchastity, by the angry Theseus (σὺ σώφρων καὶ κακῶν ἀκήρατος; 949) and will reflect the chorus' hope for something to be found only in the realm of prayer, "a mind untouched by sufferings" (1114), when Hippolytus' banishment is a reality.

It is in the parodos, directly after the old servant's attempt to reproach Hippolytus for his neglect of Kypris (88-118), that the sea makes its first extended appearance in the play. The intricate first strophe begins with "Ocean," and develops a quiet and lovely scene: the spring and the sun-warmed rocks where the women of Troezen wash their clothes. Thus an immediate contrast is created between this women's world, with its pleasant domestic tasks, and Hippolytus' troop of hunters. Here sea contrasts with woodland, ocean with pure river, the languid flowing of water over the rocks with the strenuous activities of the austere young men. The contrast is sharpened by the echo of Hippolytus' ποταμίαισι . . . δρόσοις (78) in the chorus' ποταμὶά δρόσω (127). The sea is here calm, beautiful, the gathering place for the good matrons of Troezen. Yet sea is the element of Aphrodite, and it is toward the end of the first strophe that we hear first of Phaedra, unnamed as yet, only δέσποινα, "my mistress" (130). The antistrophe develops the full picture of Phaedra's passion-caused "sickness" (131ff); and it is a fine stroke of Euripides' poetic imagination that the passion-sick queen should be introduced in this setting, by the sea. At the mention of Phaedra the gentle sea of the first strophe becomes sinister and dangerous. The death to which her self-starvation is leading her is described, in one of the recurrent metaphors of the play, as a shipwreck: θανάτου θέλου-/σαν κέλσαι ποτὶ τέρμα δύστανον (139-40). The first strophic system thus begins to create a juxtaposition between the

peaceful, domestic life of woman, and woman as passionate, unstable, self-destructive. The calm sea, with its happy associations, is what Phaedra is leaving behind. It is a reference-point back to her life before Kypri entered it. Henceforth she — and we — will know the sea in its disturbed and destructive aspect.

With this first description of Phaedra's sickness in the antistrophe, there appears also a fuller intimation of the wildness of the natural world. The chorus asks if she is afflicted by Pan or Hecate, or the Corybantes or the "Mountain Mother" (141-44), all ambiguous divinities, associated with the elemental powers of nature. Then they ask about Dictynna, whose connection with the wild is emphasized by the epithet *πολύθηρον* (145). Dictynna is, paradoxically, an aspect of Artemis (see e.g. *I.T.* 127) and, as *πολύθηρος*, would be, one might expect, connected somehow with Hippolytus. Yet here she is associated with Phaedra's passion and the sea: "For she (Dictynna) travels also through the marsh and over the dry land by the sea in the brine's sea-whirls" (149-51). There is perhaps a certain suspense and irony built up by the chorus' failure to name the goddess who is really responsible; they increase the irony by dwelling instead upon her enemy, Dictynna-Artemis, in terms of the element which symbolizes Aphrodite's own power. Yet the invocation of Dictynna is perhaps more to the mark than the chorus knows. She belongs to the Cretan past, to the dangerous, passion-filled ancestry of Phaedra, for in legend she was pursued nine months by Minos, Phaedra's father, before plunging into the sea to escape (see Callimachus, *Hymn* 3.189-203), and her worship was especially prominent in Crete.<sup>18</sup> The aspect of the sea associated with her too is different from the peace of the first strophe: there the warm rocks, dripping with pure water; here the giddy whirl of sand by the shore, something of the passion and desperation surrounding Dictynna's leap. The *Limna* referred to here is probably also the sanctuary of Artemis at which Hippolytus exercises his horses,<sup>19</sup> and as such is soon to be called upon with longing by the Aphrodite-possessed Phaedra (228; see 1131ff). The reference to Dictynna, especially in conjunction with the sea, thus leads deeper into Phaedra's passion and begins to adumbrate the involvement in it of Hippolytus and his world.

In the antistrophe the chorus continues questioning, and asks if anyone sailing from Crete has brought bad news (155ff). The sea is again the conveyer of misfortune; and the crossing of it a token of disaster. The chorus has already spoken of Phaedra's coming death as a shipwreck (140, see above); and Aphrodite referred briefly to Theseus' carrying Phaedra over the sea (*ναυστολεῖ*, 36). In a later ode, the ship



which brought Phaedra will be pronounced ill-omened (752ff). In the present ode, however, though the reference is not to Phaedra's own crossing, the chorus establishes her connection, through the sea, with Crete, the land of sinister passions to which Dictynna already points.

The chorus ends, in the epode (162ff), with a woman's prayer to Artemis, goddess of childbirth—"the heavenly Artemis who gives good births" (εὐλοχον οὐρανίαν). Thus, as they turn back from the dangerous passions of their Cretan mistress to the burdens of normal wifehood and motherhood and the goddess who helps them therein, they also turn back from the turbulent sea to the sky (as they are to do later in the "escape" ode, 732ff). A sinister connection with the wild remains, however, in the other epithet they give Artemis. They call her "mistress of arrows" (167), the weapons which connect her, and her hunter-follower, Hippolytus, with the wild, weapons which she will use to destroy Aphrodite's favorite in the future (see 1422, 1451).<sup>20</sup>

With Phaedra's appearance and the first episode (170-524), the tension is deepened between woodland and sea, fresh waters and troubled sea, Artemis and Aphrodite. Phaedra's longing for a draught of "pure waters" (209) and for a "grassy meadow" (210) recall the pure waters of Hippolytus' *aidos* (78) and the "untouched meadow" from which he brings his offering (73-74). She longs too for the woodland (ὕλαν, 215) and the hunting of wild beasts, and desires "to hurl the Thessalian javelin holding the barbed missile in my hand" (220-22). The nurse echoes her plaint in words which underline (unknown to her) the connection with Hippolytus' haunts (cf. κρηναίων νασμῶν, 225; δροσερά, 226). Then Phaedra calls upon "Mistress Artemis of Limne by the sea" (228) and expresses her desire to train horses in her sanctuary, so that the nurse again wonders at her "love for horses by the waveless sands" (234-35). The language here draws both upon the earlier description of Hippolytus' surroundings (74ff) and the sea-imagery of the preceding choral ode.

With Phaedra's entrance, then, the innocence of woodland and mountains (see 233), of hunting and horse-riding, becomes touched by a more complex element, her hidden erotic desires. She gives the "meadow" in which she would recline the sensuously suggestive epithet κομήτη (210). Indeed, for Phaedra the meadow has associations exactly opposite to those it had for Hippolytus.<sup>21</sup> She, or the Nurse, uses repeatedly the verb ἔραμαι (219, 225, 236; and note πόθον, 234). The ambiguity is, of course, inherent in her situation, that she cannot reveal the truth of her longing, though it is of itself seeking release and expression in these cryptic desires. This very ambiguity, therefore,

tinges the natural world, as here presented, with a complexity which it lacked in the statements of either Hippolytus or the chorus. For Phaedra, too, these elements of wild nature are dangerously near. The chorus spoke of them as something remote and terrible (see 141ff), but Phaedra actually wants to enter the wild. Hence, too, her appeal to Artemis has a new ambiguity. It is to give utterance to her passion that she calls upon the pure, maidenly goddess, invoked before by Hippolytus and the chorus: δέσπουν' ἄλίας "Ἀρτεμι Λίμνας (228) are her words. The adjective "of the sea"<sup>22</sup> thus recalls not only the chorus' disturbed invocation to Dictynna, but also suggests the goddess under whose power she really lies. In the name of Artemis she is in fact calling upon Aphrodite; and through the ambiguity of her situation the calm world of Hippolytus and the chorus, the wilds and the gentle sea, begin to be invaded by her restless passion and become transformed into the images of her desire.

The ambiguity of her situation is increased by the emphasis on horses, with an obvious erotic allusion in 231.<sup>23</sup> The horse will, in fact, recur in the play as an erotic metaphor (see 546, 1425). At the end of this exchange, however, the Nurse speaks of Phaedra as being "reined out of her path" (ἀνασειράζει, 237) by one of the gods. The horse, in Phaedra's "transformation," refers no longer to Hippolytus' chaste pursuits, but to Phaedra's ardent desire, no longer to Artemis (with whom Phaedra ostensibly associates it), but to Aphrodite who has, in truth, "reined back" Phaedra like a horse. Possessed by the sea-wild goddess, she dwells on the free-running violence of the horse. The connection is complex, for the horses, though associated with Artemis, are connected explicitly with the sea through Limne and the "waveless shore" (235-36). Here *eros* (see ἔρασαι, 236), sea-sand, and horses are united — albeit in a still indefinite way — in Phaedra's desire; and so they will be finally in Hippolytus' end.

The tension relaxes somewhat in the ensuing dialogue between the Nurse and the chorus (267ff)<sup>24</sup>; but, as it builds up again toward the terrible revelation, the power of the sea returns. The Nurse complains that Phaedra is not "softened" or "moistened" (ἐτέγγετο) by her words (303), using the verb which occurred in the parodos of the women's innocent washing by the sea (127) — the calm sea which Phaedra is leaving behind. Then, turning to Phaedra abruptly in the next line, she urges her to be "bolder than the sea" (304-5). The change of address from the chorus to Phaedra and from the third back to the second person in these lines (300-305), an effect of which the ancients were well aware,<sup>25</sup> marks a heightening of the tension.

As Phaedra's passion was introduced earlier by the sea, so the sea here accompanies the revelation of the fearfulness of that passion. The horse, too, is present at this new critical point, in the Nurse's oath by "the Amazon, mistress of the horse" (ἄνασσαν ἱππίαν, 307), echoed immediately after in *Ἰππόλυτον* (310), the name which wrings from Phaedra her first cry of weakness — οἶμοι — and sets in motion the final revelation. A few lines later she speaks of her subjection to her passion in terms of a storm: χειμάζομαι (315), an image of helplessness before a raging sea, recalls the image of shipwreck which the chorus used of her approaching death by starvation in the parodos (140). The violence of the sea, now full upon her, is about to burst upon the Nurse and the chorus. Under the Nurse's cross-examination she calls upon her sinister Cretan heredity (337ff) and finally can bring out ὁ τῆς Ἀμαζόνος, which the Nurse quickly completes with *Ἰππόλυτον* (351-52), repeating the telling words from 307-10. The Nurse then ends with the famous statement of Kypris' power: "Kypris, then, is found to be no god, but something greater than a god, whatever it is, who destroys her and me and the house" (359-61). The sea, virginity (the Amazon), Kypris, and finally Crete at the end of choral song (362-72), thus combine to introduce Phaedra's first coherent statement of her position (373ff).

The interplay between emotion and logic, lyric and dialogue is especially intense here. Phaedra's confession and the Nurse's statement of Aphrodite's power (359-61) seem of themselves to release the disturbed and passionate dochmiacs at 362; and these significantly end with another statement about the τύχα Κύπριδος (371-72) and with the chorus' pitiful cry, ὦ τάλαινα παῖ Κρησία (372).

It is with these last words ringing in her ears that Phaedra begins her famous speech to the "women of Troezen" (373ff) in which she sets forth her attempt, and failure, to "conquer Kypris" (401), and her resolution to die. The sea plays a small though significant part in this scene and the following chorus; but the sense of the approaching violence is carried by other lines of imagery. The elemental force of *eros* manifests itself in phrases like μ' ἔρωσ ἔτρωσεν (392), νικῶσα (399), Κύπριν κρατῆσαι (401); and these contrast tragically with the quieter words of will and intention (see ἐσκόπουν, 392; προυνοσάμην, 399; βουλευμάτων, 402). This imagery of conquest and violence will emerge even more fully later in the language of the chorus.

In the midst of her ensuing denunciation of adulterous women (407ff), however, Phaedra calls upon "Lady Kypris of the sea" (δέσποινα ποντία Κύπρι, 415). Thus at the moment when she is most fully resolved to preserve her marital purity, she calls upon the goddess who is causing



her ruin and addresses her in the name of the malignant element through which her power will be made manifest. This epithet, *ποντία*, evokes again the vastness of Aphrodite's power and the ruthless will behind it which the goddess announced in the opening lines (see *Πόντου*, 3). Phaedra's invocation of "Aphrodite of the sea" perhaps recalls too her earlier appeal to "Lady Artemis of Limne by the sea" (228). Then she was still concealing her passion and, one might say, invoking Artemis with Aphrodite in her heart and mind. Now, however, the truth of her domination by Aphrodite is revealed, and the revelation is coupled with the sea.

The Nurse, in her counter-speech (432ff) completes the revelation with a fuller statement of Aphrodite's power; yet she lacks the full knowledge of what it is that she is releasing. Thus she tells Phaedra, "the goddess' wrath has fallen upon you" (438) but has no sense of how implacable and destructive is this wrath. Actually, of course, the Nurse is mistaken, for the object of the goddess' wrath is Hippolytus, not Phaedra; and it is only the indifference of the goddess which is to involve Phaedra's death with his: *ἦ δ' εὐκλεῆς μὲν, ἀλλ' ὁμῶς ἀπόλλυται, / Φαίδρα* (47f). Her ruthless power is then presented in terms of the sea: "Kypris is not to be endured if she flows full on" (*ἦν πολλὴ ῥυτῇ*, 443). She is like an on-rushing wave, and the image is developed a few lines later: "Kypris travels in the air, she's in the sea-surge (*ἐν θαλασσίῳ / κλύδωνι*); everything is born from her" (447-48). The juxtaposition of sky and sea again suggests Aphrodite's words in the opening lines, here restated by one of the mortals who is to prove subject to them (cf. also *πολλή* in vv. 1 and 443). No part of nature is free of Aphrodite. Earlier the chorus rather innocently saw the cause of Phaedra's condition in Dictynna (Artemis) who frequents the sea (149ff), but the power and essence of the sea as the force behind Phaedra's tragedy are to be found instead with Dictynna's opposite, Aphrodite.<sup>26</sup> The nurse here gives instances of her power in the sky (Zeus, Eos<sup>27</sup>), and when the tragedy is complete, the truth of her omnipresence will receive its full and final formulation (see 1268ff).

The Nurse continues the imagery of the destructive sea in asking Phaedra how she will "swim out" (*ἐκνεῖσαι*, 469) of the misfortune into which she has fallen. Phaedra, in the power of Aphrodite, is like a swimmer, helpless, in a wild sea, and the sea is the goddess: *θεὸς ἐβουλήθη τάδε* (476). It is part of the tragic helplessness of both Phaedra and the Nurse that the latter uses these images of the raging sea and the feeble swimmer when she hopes to save. The imagery thus reflects the tragic pattern which marks the whole course of the Nurse's interference in Phaedra's passion.



At the end of her speech, the Nurse, having failed by rational means (her verbal arguments), resorts to irrational: the hope of enchantment or charms, ἐπωδαὶ καὶ λόγοι θελκτήριον, as a possible drug or cure (φάρμακον) for Phaedra's "disease" (478–79). Here again the Nurse's short-term expediency involves her in a limited grasp of the situation and even self-contradiction. She who admitted the power of Aphrodite as a pervasive force in nature (see 447–50) hopes to escape this force by means outside of nature, spells and magic. Phaedra, however, still resists, and does so in language which recalls the Nurse's initial despair on hearing of her mistress' passion. There, before she had time to make her "second thoughts" (436), the Nurse spoke of the more-than-divine Aphrodite as "destroying the house" (δόμους ἀπώλεσεν, 361). Here Phaedra uses the same phrase (δόμους τ' ἀπόλλυσι) of the "fine words" of *the Nurse* (487). Thus, as Phaedra moves closer to her doom, her would-be savior comes to embody the very power she would evade. In seeking to circumvent Aphrodite's destructive power, the Nurse only becomes her agent. Mortals fulfill her will by their very means of escape.

Phaedra's brief statement of continued resistance is met by the Nurse's accusation of σεμνότης (σεμνομυθεῖς, 490), haughtiness toward the gods and the necessities they represent, the same reproach as was made, for a similar reason, to Hippolytus (see 93ff). Thus the fates of the two victims begin to converge in terms of the goddess who is destroying them. And at this point Phaedra begins to weaken, first in 498–99, and more significantly in 503ff: Speak no further, she says; my soul is subdued (ὑπείργασμαι) to *eros*; if you go on, I shall be taken by that which I flee. The verb ὑπείργασμαι continues the violent, warlike imagery noted above (see 392ff), especially if, as one commentator has claimed, the metaphor refers to the undermining of a town (though no such usage is clearly attested). The verb is also used, however, of plowing a field, and thus metaphorically does take Phaedra back "to that which I flee," to Aphrodite the "sower (ἡ σπείρουσα, 449) of *eros*," the giver of all generation on earth (448–50). It is not, of course, impossible that both metaphors, the violent and the sexual, are intended: the mixture of destructive and creative (or procreative) is essential to the ambiguity of Aphrodite's nature.

The Nurse, however, takes up her advantage and presses at the point where Phaedra is vulnerable, the charms, the magical and irrational, that which is beyond the strict logic by which Phaedra has held down her passion (see 391ff). It is part of the tragedy of Phaedra's nature that she who maintained her strength of will and rational control for so long

should yield so quickly to the irrational hopes held out by the Nurse. The surrender to the magical charms is the surrender of her reason, as the reversion to her childhood trust in the Nurse is the surrender of her will.<sup>28</sup> She becomes a tragic exemplar of her own dictum:

τὰ χρήστ' ἐπιστάμεσθα καὶ γινώσκομεν,  
οὐκ ἐκπονοῦμεν δ' . . . (381-82)

Thus Phaedra seizes upon these "love charms" (φίλτρα . . . θελκτήρια ἔρωτος, 509-10) which she ignored shortly before (see 478-79); and asks, perhaps half-conscious of what her question implies, "Is the drug (φάρμακον) something to be used as ointment or to be drunk?" (516). At the beginning of her long speech previously, Phaedra had spoken confidently of her resolution and clear moral perceptions, and affirmed that there was no "drug" (φάρμακον) that could make her change her mind (388-90). But how she has accepted, against her well-reasoned intention, a "drug" of a very different kind, one that vitiates her reason, indeed all rationality, and with it her life.<sup>29</sup> When her ruin is complete, the Nurse is to exclaim, "I searched and found drugs (φάρμακα) for your disease — but not those I wished" (698-99).

And here, into this breach in Phaedra's will and reason, the destructive sea pours. The Nurse gives utterance to her hopes of saving her mistress with another invocation to Kypris of the sea: "Only may you, Lady Kypris of the sea, be a helper" (522-23). The phrase, δέσποινα ποντία Κύπρι, is identical (in verse-position also) with Phaedra's earlier invocation of the goddess in her tirade against adulterous wives (415), and makes clearer her tragic helplessness before the goddess and the ultimate weakness of resolve and reason: Phaedra is to become, through Kypris, one of those women whom she has cursed in the name of Kypris.

The repetition perhaps intimates also a certain ambiguity in this earlier resolve: even there, in the vehemence of her asseverations, Kypris and the sea were acting upon her will, although it is by them that she swears her purity. The sea here is thus in part a psychological symbol, reflecting a complex subjective aspect of the protagonist. It reflects powerful drives operating inwardly, but repressed.<sup>30</sup> In line 415 Phaedra attempts to transform into its opposite this element of sea-Kypris latent in her; but here in line 522 it begins to emerge for what it is. In this sense, the goddess whom the Nurse invokes as a "helper in the deed" (συνεργός, 523) has already been helping her from within Phaedra. She is the unconscious part of Phaedra's psyche which wishes to yield. On the level of the literal narrative, too, the invocation to

Kypris as a helper is deeply ironical: the Nurse has no idea how willing a helper the goddess already is and how destructive is the sea-power by which she calls upon her.

It is with the sea, then, *ποντία Κύπρις*, that the first great crisis in the tragedy is reached. The following powerful chorus on Eros (525ff) develops the theme of violence and human helplessness latent in the preceding scene (see lines 392, 399, 401, 470), and complements the destructive power of the sea with its opposite, *fire*. No missile of fire is more powerful than that of Eros (530ff). Eros gave Iole to Heracles amid blood and smoke (551). The union which joined Zeus and Semele for the birth of Dionysus was accompanied by the "fiery thunder" (*βροντῇ ἀμφιπύρρῳ*) which took Semele's life (559ff). In Semele, who is consumed by the fire of her lover and yet brings forth the divine child, is imaged the fearful ambiguity of Kypris as a generative and destructive force. Aphrodite breathes fearfully (*δεινά*) upon everything, and yet she is a bee, the maker of sweetness, that flits through the air (563-64).<sup>31</sup> The fire, followed by the image of the bee flying, is perhaps to be associated with the presence of Aphrodite in the air. With the reference to the stars in line 530 these images continue to widen the scope of Aphrodite's power in accordance with her opening words in the prologue.

This power, fully revealed in its destructiveness, is now turned against the calm world of the past. The verb *στάζεις* (526) recalls the "rock dripping (*στάζουσα*, 121) the waters of Ocean" and the pure, clear waters of an untroubled domestic happiness in the parodos. Here, however, it is "desire" that is dripping, and the verb is also suggestive of the dangerous *pharmakon* through which Phaedra has yielded to the Nurse and Kypris (see 516). The missile (*βέλος*, 530) is no longer the weapon of the pure hunter in the wild (see 222), but the fire-blazing dart hurled by Eros. The bee is here associated with the destructive, omnipresent Aphrodite, not the "untouched meadow" of virginity and Artemis (see 77). The horse, too, connected with Hippolytus' pure and austere life, is here an unambiguously erotic metaphor, joined with fire, blood, and (if the text is right) marriage-songs that bode disaster (545ff). The elemental force of Kypris thus invades and disturbs the calm world of Hippolytus and Artemis, of Troezen before Phaedra.

In the second antistrophe the violence of Eros is presented in dangerous proximity to spring-waters. The imagery of calm water is familiar from Hippolytus' speech on *aidos* (see 78) and the parade. Here the "mouth of Dirce," the Theban fountain, is called upon as a witness to the fiery marriage and parturition of Semele. Yet it is not the



clear water of Dirce alone that is called upon, but the "holy wall of Thebes" itself. The enclosed life of the town, with its traditions and sanctity, calm as the waters of its springs, is threatened, or at least awed, by Aphrodite's power. Nor is the introduction of Dirce and the Theban wall merely fortuitous, for Eros in the ode is truly a destroyer of civilizations, approaching like an army (see ἐπιστρατεύση, 527) with dreadful weapons (530), a sacker of cities (πέρθοντα, 541) bringing fire, smoke, blood (545ff). Both the fire and the military imagery thus converge destructively upon human order as embodied in the city wall and the city springs.<sup>32</sup> The ode thus universalizes the power of Eros and carries the implications of his impact beyond the individual life to human civilization as a whole. Yet at the end it leaves us with the delicate picture of the flitting bee.

At the dramatic climax of the play, where Phaedra and Hippolytus' personalities clash most directly, sea again becomes a controlling image. In his angry denunciation of women, Hippolytus reverts to the pure streams of his first speech (see 78): he will wash out his ears with "swift-flowing streams" (ῥυτοῖς νασμοῖσιν, 653), dashing the water into them (ἐς ὄτα κλύζων, 654). The purity of the streams belongs to his life as he has lived it hitherto, with its calm and serenity. Now, however, the flood has broken; and this past world is being transformed by the violence of Aphrodite. The ῥυτοῖς recalls the onrushing flood of Kypris in 443 (ῥυῆ); the κλύζων (properly of the dashing of waves, a violent word: see *Agamemnon*, 1181-82) suggests the "sea-flood" of Kypris (θαλασσίῳ κλύδωνι) in 447-48. Hippolytus is led by his vehemence into the same kind of violence as that which has come from the sea-surge of the love-goddess to overwhelm Phaedra. And this vehemence, of course, brings about his doom. He follows up this assertion by a characteristic, and equally disastrous, affirmation of his self-righteousness: "How then would I be evil who think that I am not pure if I but hear such things?" (654-55). Yet the impact of Aphrodite's violence upon his untroubled purity is perhaps reflected in his wish, shortly before, that women be allowed no maids, but only "voiceless wild beasts" (ἄφθογγα . . . δάκη θηρῶν, 646-47). These beasts no longer belong to the innocent wild of Artemis; instead, the dangerous, passion-filled violence of Aphrodite begins to affect Hippolytus' world. Again there is an ironic connection between his own violence, wherewith he plays into Kypris' hands, and his coming destruction: his passionate outcry that a woman should have only "voiceless" companions will confirm Phaedra's suicide and her plan to leave behind a tablet that will "shout" (βοᾷ βοᾷ δέλτος ἄλαστα, 877) and "have voice" (φθεγγόμενον, 880). On another level,



this violence is the force of Kypris latent in him; but, because repressed, it emerges as its opposite, with "overcompensation" in the extravagance and virulence of his denunciations.

At this point, then, the peaceful woodland of Hippolytus becomes touched by the sea-world of Aphrodite and begins itself to become ambiguous, to turn against the hero as will his own horses later. In Phaedra's eyes, he begins to become one of the wild beasts he hunts, sharing their cruelty and recklessness, their instinctive, unreflecting action. Earlier, when she first heard his denunciations, she associated him, by a verbal play, with his horse-loving Amazon mother, a creature of the wild, lacking ordinary womanly feelings (see 581-82: ὁ τῆς φιλίππου παῖς Ἀμαζόνος βοᾷ/Ἱππόλυτος . . .; also 307-10). Then after his outburst, immediately upon her new resolve to die, she speaks of him as having "his mind sharpened by anger" (ὀργῇ συντεθηγμένος φρένας, 689). The verb is commonly used of wild boars sharpening their tusks savagely.<sup>33</sup> It thus reveals what Phaedra here sees in Hippolytus: the negative, inhuman aspects of the wild he loves. It is again part of the ironical ambiguity in which Hippolytus' world — and his goddess — are placed that later, in a striking metaphor, the tablets which Phaedra has left, which Hippolytus' extreme reaction has forced her to write, are said to "fawn upon" Theseus (προσσαιίνουσι, 863). The wild animal is led to his doom by his very wildness, and the destroyer is the tame animal, the "fawner." Hence, too, when Phaedra has formed her design, she swears the chorus to silence by "revered Artemis, daughter of Zeus" (713), the goddess of Hippolytus and the goddess of the untouched wild.

This untouched wild, however, with what belongs to it, is so far only a secondary, though contributing, agent. It becomes active and dangerous only through its contact with and opposition to the surging sea. Sea is still the primary motive force, and Phaedra is to be its first victim. She who could barely "swim out" (470) of her troubles is now totally overwhelmed by the sea: her suffering is like a great flood "not to be passed" (δυσεκπέρατον) save at the cost of her life (677-78). The divine force behind the flood is hinted at in her desperate question, just before: "Who of gods or mortals would appear as an accomplice or an associate or a helper (ξυνεργός) in evil deeds" (675-77). The *ξυνεργός* harks back to the Nurse's appeal to Sea-Kypris in 522 (*ξυνεργὸς εἴης*). She has been a "helper" indeed, and the sign of her work is the rising sea.

In accordance with the pattern of alternating tension and relief in the play this climax is followed by the so-called "escape ode" (732ff), with its lyrical expression of flight over the sea and its expansive half-mythical

geography which, temporarily, lifts us beyond the tragic locale with its concentrated action. The chorus would rise over the sea as a bird and come finally where the sea, or sailing, is not, "where the sea-ruler of the dark lake no longer permits a path to sailors" (744-45). Here, too, recur pure springs, the ambrosial springs of Zeus, recalling the pure, untroubled world presented early in the play. Sea and sky here meet in harmony (746-77), not the fearful clash that is to come (see 1207); and earth, too, joins in providing abundance and happiness (749-51). Yet this world, beyond passion and beyond violence, is a world for the gods alone; and with them the first strophic system significantly ends (*εὐδαιμονίαν θεοῖς*, 751).

Even this world of escape and divinity, however, knows suffering, but only because of a mortal's entrance into it. Hence the amber-like tears which "the unhappy sisters of Phaethon drip into the dark flood (*οἶδμα*) of their father in pity for him" (738ff). The swelling sea (*οἶδμα*) as mortals know it means grief; but here, in this mythical, imaginary world, tears can be transformed into something precious and beautiful (*ἡλεκτροφαεῖς*, 741). The "dripping" (*σταλάσσουσιν*) of tears, however, recalls the previous two odes — the peaceful dripping rock by the sea of the parode, and the dripping of desire into the eyes by Eros in the first stasimon. It suggests, then, even here the persistence of mortal suffering and the continuing power of Aphrodite working to destroy the calm past.

Similarly, the sea and sky which unite in the paradisiacal vision of the first strophe have been established from the very beginning of the play as the realm of Aphrodite. Hence in the second strophic system with the shift from the divine to the human world, the two elements, sea and sky, are united again, but now for destruction rather than peace. The first words, "O white-winged Cretan bark" (*ὦ λευκόπτερε Κρησία / πορθμῖς*) bring them together in a sinister association:<sup>34</sup> we are reminded of the previous unhappy associations of a ship from Crete (155ff; see 36) and indeed of Crete itself (cf. especially *παῖ Κρησία*, 372).

This sea, moreover, significantly carries Phaedra *away* from happiness (*ὀλβίων ἀπ' οἴκων*, 755), not toward it, as the sea of the first strophe. It is now stormy, violent: *κῦμ' ἀλίκτηπον ἄλμας*; and the ship passes directly through, not over, it. No wishful transport upon the air here. True, in the next lines (756ff) the ship is said to have "flown" (*ἔπτατο*) like a bird, but it is a bird of ill-omen (*δύσσορνς*). It is, furthermore, moored to the harbor in Piraeus by "woven (*πλεκτάς*) cables" which foreshadow the woven noose (770) with which Phaedra is to hang herself (note the emphasis on knots, figurative and literal, in 671, 774, 781).<sup>35</sup>

In the antistrophe the destructive power of Aphrodite is made explicit (767), and with it the power of the sea: Phaedra becomes the boat swamped with water, overwhelmed by the sea: *ὑπέραντλος* (which occurs only here in Classical Greek) is the word used.<sup>36</sup> The "white neck" about which Phaedra will fit the noose not only suggests the tragic waste of Phaedra's youth and beauty, but also cancels, finally, the hope to escape the sea like a "winged bird" uttered in the first strophe (esp. 733; cf. also the "white-winged" bark in 752). The "hung-up noose" (*κρεμαστόν . . . βρόχον*, 770) evokes also the gruesome truth of Phaedra's "escape" into the air, the corpse swinging suspended above the ground (see also 779, *κρεμαστοῖς ἐν βρόχοις ἡρτημένη*; and 802). It is thus that she "flies away" (828-29); and the tablet which will continue her act of destruction is also "hanging" (*ἡρτημένη*, 857).

Thus — to come back to the "escape" ode — with the return to reality and to mortal men in the second strophe, the bird and the sea pass from being sources of hope to being instruments of disaster. It is therefore with the reality of Phaedra's passion that the ode ends. The chorus' concluding words about her "painful love" (*ἀλγεινὸν . . . ἔρωτα*) recall what the Nurse said about the two forms of love "sweetest and painful" (347). This love is to prove "painful" to Theseus too (*ἀλγυνούσι*, 798; *ἄλγιστα*, 800). Phaedra has in a sense escaped this love, as the chorus says (*ἀπαλάσσουσα*, 774-75), but at the cost of her life. Thus there is no aspect of the universe that provides escape or refuge from Aphrodite. Phaedra, who would have escaped into the calm woodland (see 208ff) is caught, *ὑπέραντλος*, by the sea, triumphant over its resisting victim; and the bird with which the chorus would escape the human reality becomes the omen of her death.

This presage of her death is at once fulfilled with the Nurse's cries (776ff). Theseus enters at this point, and it is through him that the remainder of the tragedy will be executed. At the news he hurls to the ground his crown of leaves, woven together (*πλεκτοῖσι*, 807) like the cables of the ship which brought Phaedra across the sea to her doom (*πλεκτάς*, 761). The throwing down of this crown is also the symbolical counterpart to Hippolytus' presentation of the "woven crown" (*πλεκτόν στέφανον*) to Artemis at his entrance, the scene from which the play's title, *στεφανίας*, derives. In both scenes, of course, the visual enactment would reinforce the verbal repetition; and the two events, as "images of action" mark two cardinal points in the structure of the play. Theseus' act now shatters Hippolytus' peaceful life, symbolized in part by the crown gathered from the "untouched meadow" and offered

to his goddess. The throwing down of the wreath by Theseus, standing as he does at the opposite pole of character and experience from his son, prefigures for Hippolytus the closing off and destruction of the world into which he has "escaped." The theme is thus analogous to the second strophe of the "escape" ode, with its forebodings of the "realities" to come; the "weaving" image (73, 761, 807) in fact connects all three passages. Significantly, then, when Hippolytus' death is imminent, the chorus sings that the "resting-places" of his goddess will henceforth be "without crowns" (ἀστέφανοι, 1137). In itself, of course, Theseus' flinging down of the sacred wreath of his *θεωρία* is ominous enough.<sup>37</sup> For him too it marks the sudden and violent interruption of a peaceful life, the pleasant official and ritual duties which are a part of his kingly honor.

As the crown-imagery looks back to Hippolytus and Artemis and the world which is being destroyed, the following imagery points to the irrupting forces, Phaedra and Aphrodite — the victim who is also the agent, and the superhuman power underlying all the action and all the destruction. Theseus bewails his loss thus:

κακῶν δ' ὧ τάλας, πέλαγος εἰσορῶ  
τοσοῦτον ὥστε μήποτ' ἐκνεῦσαι πάλιν,  
μηδ' ἐκπερᾶσαι κύμα τῆσδε συμφορᾶς.

(822-24)

Alas, I behold a sea of troubles such as I shall never swim out of again nor pass beyond the wave of this disaster.

The language echoes Phaedra's earlier utterance of her subjection to the power of the sea (cf. ἐκνεῦσαι, 470; δυσεκπέρατον, 678) and suggests the gradual spreading of the calamity as the force of the sea and Aphrodite break forth as what they are.

Theseus, continuing his lament, addresses the dead Phaedra thus: "For like some bird you have gone off out of my hand to disappear, bounding in a swift leap to Hades" (828-29). This bird imagery continues the theme of the "escape" ode, and, in conjunction with 822-24, marks the universal power of Aphrodite, manifest in both sea and sky. It denotes here not the fancy of escape, but the closing in of the reality of the mortal world, not freedom and potentiality, but bondage to the elemental forces of nature. The possibility of escape is cut off by death, the death for which the bird here stands. This now negative significance of the bird touches the future as well as the present, for when Theseus is about to read the tablet, the chorus, like a prophet (*mantis*) senses a bird of ill-omen (οἰωνόν, 873).



Whatever hopefulness was previously associated with bird and sky now gives way to the destructive reality of sea as through Theseus it touches its new victim. Directly upon the chorus' presentiment of disaster (873) Theseus reads the tablet and calls his woe "hard to pass beyond" (*δυσεκπέρατον*, 883), echoing Phaedra in 678 (this word occurs only in these two passages in Euripides' extant works). Then he utters the fatal words, "Hippolytus dared to touch my bed" (885), whereupon follows his curse, in terms of the sea: "Exiled from this country, a wanderer to a foreign land, shall he bilge out (*ἀντλήσει*) his bitter life" (898). This last metaphor, along with the preceding *δυσεκπέρατον*, again take us back to Phaedra (cf. *ὑπέραντλος*, 769). The repeated image thus extends her fate to Hippolytus and involves him, too, in subjection to the mounting power of the sea. There is more truth than Theseus knows in his first despairing words to his dead wife: "You destroyed rather than perished yourself" (*ἀπώλεσας γὰρ μᾶλλον ἢ κατέφθισο*, 839). But behind her it is Aphrodite who is the "destroyer" *δόμους ἀπώλεσεν*, 361, 487).

With Theseus the force of the sea is continued in its wild, irrational power, but now under another aspect: the violent, male anger associated with Poseidon, who fulfills Theseus' angry curse (887ff). Just before Hippolytus' cool and rational defence, Theseus reiterates his decree of banishment by calling to witness "Sinis of the Isthmus" (977) and "the Skironian rocks that neighbor the sea" (*αἱ θαλάσση σύννομοι Σκιρωνίδες . . . πέτραι*, 979-80). The sea, in its connection with the Isthmian robber and the rock-dwelling tormentor of travelers, suggests the whole realm of cruelty and bitter experience that the wide-traveled Theseus has known, in contrast to the innocence of his woods- and mountain-loving son. These rocks too, unlike those by which the chorus of Troezenian women sang of their quiet, domestic tasks, belong in the world of violence and bloodshed which Theseus is calling down upon his son. Among these rocks murder was violently done and violently punished. Here, then, the sea widens its symbolical range to include another manifestation of the instinctive life of man. With Theseus the two aspects of the sea converge and bear down together upon Hippolytus' peaceful world. The sea which Theseus calls upon thus creates a new contrast of innocence and experience, and in so doing it sharpens the tragedy of Hippolytus' undeserved punishment. He is at the opposite pole from *kakoi*, like Sinis and Sciron; and the tragic irony of Theseus' introduction of his triumphs over these brigands is intensified by Hippolytus' repeated, if self-righteous, statements that he is not nor could be *kakos* (e.g. 654, 1191).

The tragic irony deepens and foreshadows the *peripeteia* as Hippolytus shortly after, in averring that he is not *kakos*, calls upon the very sea that will destroy him: "Let neither sea (πόντος) nor earth receive my flesh if I have been an evil man (κακὸς ἀνὴρ, 1030-31). His oath only angers Theseus the more, who replies with a counter wish involving the sea: "If I could (I would drive you) beyond the sea and the limits of Atlas" (πέραν γε πόντου τερμόνων τ' Ἀτλαντικῶν, 1053).<sup>38</sup> This line is almost identical with Aphrodite's statement of her power in the opening lines (3). It thus marks the continuation through Theseus of her relentless, irrational force in the face of all logical arguments, of even the ties of blood and filial affection. It recalls, too, the chorus' hope to escape beyond the sea and sail to "the holy limit of the sky which Atlas holds" (746-47) and marks the cancellation of this hope by the reality that is growing ever stronger and more threatening. The allusion to this ode, moreover, provides another link between the fate of Phaedra, to whose situation the ode refers, and Hippolytus, who is gradually engulfed by the same power. These references back and forth and the pervasive power of the sea which they reveal show how unified a structure the play in fact is, how closely intertwined the two parts are, and how strongly into the second part persists the presence of the two female figures, Phaedra, dead, and Aphrodite, absent.

This complex evocation of the power of the sea at the point of Hippolytus' exile, with the echoes both of the "escape" ode and Aphrodite's initial statement of her power, also helps to focus and clarify a central theme in the play: man's attempt to escape from the demanding, often savage, realities of his world by excluding a part of it from his existence. In the climaxing tragedy of Hippolytus, it is his past world, the removed and limited environment of woods and mountains, which is analogous to the chorus' longing for escape, and like it, is confronted and destroyed by the implacable reality of the sea. His hunting, for example, recurs in a sinister context in Theseus' long tirade against him: "For they [hypocrites like Hippolytus] go hunting (θηρεύουσι) with solemn words, while devising disgraceful deeds" (956-57).

As has been shown above, it is with Phaedra and her passion that this change in the significance of his past pursuits begins, first in her longing for his world (208ff) and more dangerously in the wild-animal imagery she uses to describe his violent behavior (689). Through Phaedra, too, and the situation which she creates, his fondness for athletic contests (ἀγῶνες), which he sets above political power (1016ff) takes on a sinister coloring. He is now involved in a much grimmer

"contest," one which is verbal, not physical, and in which it is his honor and his life that are at stake (*ἡγωνιζόμενῃ*, 1024; cf. *ἀμιλλῶμαι λόγοις*, 971). This new "contest," moreover, is the direct outcome of Phaedra's own "contest," for she was engaged, said the Nurse, in a "contest" for her life (496), one which she lost by a "wrestling fall" of her own hand (*σᾶς χερὸς / πάλαισμα μελέας*, 814-15). Now this "contest" has spread to Hippolytus and transformed his free *ἀγῶνες* into something tense and dangerous. As Phaedra's language earlier reflected the inhumanity of Hippolytus as hunter, so the "contest" imagery, as developed in the *ἀμιλλα λόγων* with Theseus, reflects the human limitations of his athletic ideal: there are more serious "contests" in life that Hippolytus knows not of.

Still another image marks the collision of Hippolytus' world with Phaedra's (and Aphrodite's). The figure of "disease," which is used exclusively of Phaedra in the first part of the play and is one of the most frequent metaphors there,<sup>39</sup> is here applied to Hippolytus. As he is forced to accept a "contest" as deadly as Phaedra's, so he becomes touched by the effects of her "disease" as they spread outward from her final act. Thus in the midst of his *agon* with Theseus, he exclaims, "We are afflicted (*νοσοῦμεν*), guiltless though we are" (933).

The disease image, transferred from the lovesick queen to the austere prince, has a further appropriateness, for his present calamity, viewed in terms of his previous life and his ideal of purity, is apparently as unrelated to justice and right as is a disease which spreads, irrationally and indifferently, from one victim to another. The Athenians knew well the irrationality and unpredictability of contagion from the plague of the preceding year (see especially Thuc. 2.51 and 2.53); and the extension of the *nosos*-image from Phaedra to Hippolytus suggests a similarly uncontrollable irrationality in the multiplication of disaster.

The theme of wish *versus* reality, calm and limited past *versus* expanding and dangerous present, is taken up again in the third stasimon (1102-50), sung at the moment of suspense between Hippolytus' departure for exile and the announcement of his death. Connected through this wish-theme with the "escape" ode, this song, too, precedes a great disaster. The first strophic system creates a strong antithesis of hope and reality, the latter expressed, fittingly, by Hippolytus' austere companions (1102-10), the former by the gentler, more timid Troezenian women (1111-19).

Significantly, what immediately precedes the ode is another instance of man's inability to grasp the full, complex realities of his world and himself. Hippolytus leaves the stage in lines 1100-1 shouting, "Never

will you see another man more chaste (*σωφρονέστερον*), even if my father thinks not so." *Sophonesteron* is, of course, loaded with irony and ambiguity, for not only is this parting shot singularly devoid of *sophrosyne*, but Phaedra, at the analogous point in her tragedy, had made her last spoken word a promise to teach Hippolytus *sophrosyne* (731), for her not "chastity," as Hippolytus narrowly intends it, but "good sense," "soundness of mind," "moderation."

With Hippolytus' tragic and hybristic boast quivering in the air, the chorus of his companions turns sadly and finally from the hope in the divine realm voiced in their first song (61ff) and reiterated in the "escape" ode to a more barren, but perhaps truer, view of reality:

ἦ μέγα μοι τὰ θεῶν μελεδήμαθ', ὅταν φρένας ἔλθῃ,  
 λύπας παραιρεῖ· ξύνεσιν δέ τιν' ἐλπίδι κεύθων  
 λείπομαι ἐν τε τύχαις θνατῶν καὶ ἐν ἔργμασι λεύσσων·  
 ἄλλα γὰρ ἄλλοθεν ἀμείβεται, μετὰ δ' ἴσταται ἀνδράσιν  
 αἰῶν  
 πολυπλόκητος αἰεὶ.

(1102-10)

Thoughts on the gods [or, the gods' thoughts for us] when they come to my mind greatly diminish my griefs; but, though I hold understanding concealed in hope [or, hope for some (divine) Intelligence], I am left in the lurch in men's fortunes and acts as I gaze upon them. Things change with one another from every side, and men's life shifts about, full of wandering always.

The chorus thus turns back from "hope" (note also τὰ παρ' ἐλπίδα λεύσσων, 1120) and from the infinite possibilities of the gods to the bare, unprotected realities of human finitude, "men's fortunes and acts."

The women's chorus in the antistrophe (1111-19) cannot yet accept such a vision. They remain attached somehow to hope in the gods (see εὐξαμένα θεόθεν, κτλ, 1111); and with a woman's hold on life they can still regard change and flux as not profoundly threatening. Their world is still essentially the warm and gentle sea of the parade. Thus they pray for good luck, wealth, the adaptability of their behavior to the situation, and the easy, pleasant acceptance of the "fortune" (*tychan*) of each day.<sup>40</sup>

In wishing not to have a δόξα ἀτρεκής (1115) they seem in fact to be rejecting the possibility of a clear, "accurate" view of the terrible reality with which they are being presented.<sup>41</sup> The Nurse too, it will be recalled, warned with disastrous results against excessive "accuracy" (*akribeia*, 469; cf. 261) in moral conduct. In re-echoing her warnings



the women thus attempt to separate themselves as far as possible from the fates of the two protagonists who lived — and died — because of their over-precise, uncompromising approach to life (see βιότου δ' ἀτρεκέϊς ἐπιτηδεύσεις, 261).

Such "accuracy" is perhaps closer to a simplistic rigidity than a just appreciation of the total "reality." It may be that *akribes* or *atrekes* in this sense carry some connotations of an aristocratic way of seeing the world, an undeviating devotion to a neatly circumscribed ideal. The Old Oligarch saw *akrabeia* as an aristocratic quality (ps.-Xenophon, *Ath. Pol.* 1.5):

In every country the aristocracy (*to beltiston*) is opposed to the democracy, for in the aristocrats (*tois beltistois*) there is least licentiousness and injustice, but most accuracy (*akrabeia*) about the good things; but in the common people there is most ignorance, disorder, and malice.<sup>42</sup>

If this is so, then the chorus, following the path opened up by the "plebeian" Nurse, rejects the aristocratic desire to master the world in terms of well-defined categories and absolutely valid aims, to see life clearly, simply, as conquerable by human *arete*. It is precisely because of the complexity of divinities like Aphrodite, Artemis, Poseidon, however, and the conflicting drives they instil in men that this simple view is doomed. To try to see a world wherein such powers are rampant through an ordered "neatness" or "exactness" of mind or will is *σεμνότης* — an accusation; it will be remembered, brought against both Phaedra and Hippolytus.

Yet the chorus' solution, though perhaps more feasible than that of the two protagonists, only serves to evade the problem and hence to sidestep involvement in an heroic attitude and a tragic fate. Though far from the Nurses' attitude of practical expediency, they are proven similarly inadequate to grasp and deal with the reality. They prefer to live day by day without, as it were, looking life in the face. Their wish for "a mind untouched (*ἀκήρατον*) by pain" (1114), however, recalls, as noted earlier, the "untouched meadow" (76-77) of Hippolytus' past life, the simple happiness now about to be destroyed. In this context the word "untouched" adds an ironical warning note which vitiates the optimism of their prayer and their wish for "escape."

Yet in their retreat into wish here and in the earlier ode, they are portrayed, as in the parade also, with a sympathetic humanity. They failed to save Hippolytus — which, presumably, they could have done — as they failed to respond decisively to the first news of Phaedra's death (776ff). But in these failings they are shown simply with the

natural weakness of the mass of men, accepting the pleasures of their daily existence and ever seeking an escape from the elemental realities of their world.

In the second strophic system, however, the clash between past and present, between Hippolytus' severe pursuits and his disgrace and approaching death, is made as sharp as possible. All the aspects of his previous world are recalled at the point of their destruction: the sands by the shore, the mountain groves, the hunts and Dictynna (1126-30), the horse-racing by Limne (1131ff), the crowns he gave to Artemis (1138), the deep green wood (*βαθείαν ἀνὰ χλόαν*, 1139; cf. *χλωρὰν δ' ἄν' ἔλγν*, 17). All the parts of his life that have been sheltered from the turbulence of Kypriis are destroyed by her; her power, and that of the sea, have destroyed his refuge. These haunts and pursuits recur now to mark the end of his innocence and his full exposure to the violence of Aphrodite's power. At the same time, their restatement here indicates the relentless progress of Aphrodite through the tragedy, for most of these aspects of Hippolytus' life were presented first either in connection with Phaedra's subjection to Aphrodite (so Dictynna, 145) or actually through her eyes at the height of her love-sickness (the sands by the shore: 234; the hunt: 215ff; the horse-racing by Limne and Venetian colts: 228ff). The verbal echoes thus mark the turning of Phaedra's love destructively upon Hippolytus and his world. The beginning of his disaster is thus brought full circle with its end as Phaedra's involvement of him in her love, now become hate, is complete.

Her passion, her lovesick dreams and longings, embraced the whole of Hippolytus' world, his surroundings, his activities (see 208ff). But she can grasp them only in dream or wish. When she seeks to possess them in their reality, her passion destroys them and the life they make up. The meeting of their two worlds is perhaps symbolized and dramatized by the joining of the two choruses here, one of Phaedra's women companions, the other of Hippolytus' fellow-hunters. Yet together they can only sing of the loss of the simpler past; and presumably it is this chorus of hunters which will bring in Hippolytus' mangled body. When the two worlds become intertwined, they destroy one another. The joining of the choruses perhaps marks the interlocking of the two fates, a symbolical sharing of the double tragedy. In a sense Phaedra is as much Hippolytus' victim as he is hers. Yet the destruction of his world is more complete, or at least more completely dramatized. It cannot bear the full weight of complex reality which Phaedra brings to bear upon it.

The chorus ends by echoing Hippolytus' previous affirmation of his innocence (*οὐδὲν ἄτας αἴτιον*, 1149; see 933, *οὐδὲν ὄντες αἴτιοι*); and

almost in the same breath they announce the arrival of the messenger. The climax which has been long awaited and has been seen gradually building up now bursts full upon us. Euripides uses this messenger's speech not to introduce a crisis in the middle of the play, but to state the finality of the outcome. It thus produces the sharpest possible juxtaposition of calm past and violent present, of woodland and sea, wish and reality, before the final catastrophe and the loss of all hope.

Before the long account of the disaster itself the messenger reintroduces the theme of prayer, or wish, in referring back, almost by way of prologue, to the curses Theseus called down upon his son, "the curses of your mouth which you prayed for to the lord of the sea concerning your son" (1167-68). Theseus replies with an invocation to the gods and Poseidon for hearing his "prayers" (*κατευγμάτων*, 1169-70); and the tale of Hippolytus' death follows at once (1173ff). The connection of prayer and sea, however, recalls both Hippolytus' imprecation, "Let neither sea nor earth receive my flesh . . ." (1030) and Theseus' wish to drive Hippolytus "beyond the sea and the limits of Atlas" (1054). Wish, the sea, and Poseidon take us back also to the "escape" ode, where Poseidon as "ruler of the sea" was hopefully included (cf. *ποντομέδων*, 743-44; *πόντου κρέοντι*, 1168). Yet only the destructive prayers are fulfilled. The prayers that become reality are the deadly ones, and their fulfillment implies something about the reality in which men live or can hope to live.

The scope of the power of the sea and another level of contrast with that which it destroys are suggested in the Messenger's opening words to Theseus: he calls him, naturally enough, *γῆς ἀνακτα*, ruler of the land (1153) and declares that he has to relate a matter of importance "to you and the citizens who dwell in the city of the Athenians and the limits of the Troezenian land" (1158-59). Theseus is thus summoned in his political or social capacity, and the disaster is presented as one of political, as well as merely personal significance. He, as "ruler of the land," and the ordered society he represents are confronted by Poseidon "lord of the sea." We are reminded of the similar opposition in the first stasimon on Eros, "sacker of cities" (541), bringer of fire and smoke, his power attested even by "the holy wall of Thebes" and the spring of Dirce (555ff). Both Poseidon and Eros embody forces outside of civilization which civilization is forced, with pain, to recognize.

The Messenger's speech then sets forth in detail this elemental power. It begins at once with the sea not as something remote from our land existence, but in its closest contact to human life, "the sea-receiving shore" (*ἀκτῆς κυμοδέγμωνος*, 1173), the place where its force ever

dashes unspent (note *κυμοδέγμων*: it is *waves* which the shore receives here, not just swirling sand as in 151). The shore by which the women washed, where Hippolytus trained his horses, here becomes a dangerous place of contact with elemental powers, a border country between land and sea, order and violence. The opposition is sharpened through the fact that the shore of Hippolytus' horse-racing in the previous chorus was described as *πολιήτις* (1126), and hence was associated with man's civilized life, the life of the *polis*. The shore by which he is killed, however, is fully exposed to the savage, open sea: it lies "beyond this land, already toward the Saronic sea" (*τοῦπέκεινα τῆσδε γῆς / πρὸς πόντον ἤδη κειμένη Σαρωνικόν*, 1199-1200). This "shore," therefore, now reveals the destructive potentialities which lie just beyond it. At the moment of the terrible apparition, when Hippolytus' companions looked "toward the sea-roaring shores," land is concealed by the sea: "The Scironian shores," and the Isthmus and "Asclepius' rock" are all "hidden" by the swelling sea and the foam rushing toward "the shores" (1210ff).

As land is overwhelmed by sea and as the border-ground between them becomes a place of violence and destruction, so human control and reason are overborne by the same power. Hippolytus' futile attempts to control the maddened horses are described in the metaphor of a sailor pulling on the oar (1221) or a steersman directing his course by the rudder (1224, 1227). The imagery here suggests the total engulfment by the sea: he is, literally as well as metaphorically, no longer upon the familiar, sheltered land he knows. It has all become sea. He is thus made to share the fate of the (figuratively) "shipwrecked" and drowning woman who has destroyed him. Metaphor and reality are interchanged with a terrible oscillation, for while the imagery here completes all the previous images of shipwreck and sailing, it is, at the same time, literal reality. The chorus' earlier hope to escape sea and sailing (743ff) is thus totally frustrated, for the "sailor" is destroyed not only by the sea but by his own "ship." And their wish to escape to a peaceful "shore" (*ἄκτῇ*, 737, 742), the fabled "apple-bearing coast of the Hesperides" (742) is ended on the "shore" of their own land.

With the sea, other elements of nature are released in their violence. The fire associated with the destructive force of Eros in the first stasimon (525ff) is present in the horses' "fire-born" (*πυριγενῇ*, 1223) bits which serve no longer as a check or control, but only add to the breaking forth of elemental violence.<sup>43</sup> Sky, like fire an opposite of sea, but forming with it the stated realm of Aphrodite's power (2ff), joins violently in the wave's dash against the heavens (*κῦμ' οὐρανῶ στήριζον*, 1207). And



finally the rocks by the sea, once the calm place of untroubled womanly tasks, reveal their sinister potential in mangling the horse-drawn body (πέτρῳ, 1233; σποδούμενος μὲν πρὸς πέτραις, 1238; see also λεπαίας . . . χθονός, 1248). These rocks then, like the "shore" itself, lose their association with the gentleness and order of civilized life and become connected instead with the cruel, pain-filled rocks in the name of which Theseus banished Hippolytus and sent him to his death (see 977ff, above, Pind. *Pyth.* 2. 41ft).

Here, then, all the aspects of the natural world, even elemental opposites, draw closer together and destroy the peaceful, innocent life which man, though in their midst, hopes to live among them. Through them Euripides suggests the contiguity of this elemental violence, whether within man or without, to the ordered structure of human life, and the fineness of the barrier which keeps the two realms apart.

The irruption of Aphrodite's power into the human world breaks down this barrier and transforms the once familiar environment — the shore, the rocks, the horses — into something savage and destructive. The horses, once the restraint of rational control is broken (see 1218ff) become wild animals, no longer recognizing the human master who has fed and cared for them (see 1240); and they, like the Bull, the ἄγριον τεύρας (1214), disappear afterward (1247–48). They thus revert to their original wild state and share the destructive wildness of the Bull. Ironically, Hippolytus' scorn of Aphrodite was first shown through his care of his horses (see 110ff, where he turns away from the old servant's appeal on her behalf with a command to his followers to care for the horses). He would use for his own "chaste" purposes these mettlesome, unstable creatures. Yet as instruments of her vengeance they recall the stringency of her demands and the persistence of her destructive will. Since the horses, as noted earlier, are an erotic symbol in the play, they can also fittingly serve as conduits of Aphrodite's power. They are, in fact, elsewhere associated with the goddess (see Sappho, frag.2, v.9 [Lobel-Page] and Schol. on *Iliad* 2.820). Her part in the rising up of the sea, however, is suggested not only in the horses, but also in the tossing up of foam (ἀφρόν, 1210), popularly connected with the goddess' name (*aphros* — Aphro-dite). Her presence here in sea and foam becomes explicit in the following ode (1268ff; see below).

The horse, however, is associated also with Poseidon, who, as *Hippios*, god of horses, is a god of male sexuality and fertility (note the legends of his coupling with Demeter in the form of a horse, Paus. 8.25.5ff, 8.42.1)<sup>44</sup>. In addition to these legends of the stallion-like virility of Poseidon there are also other connections of the horse with wild and

exuberant male sexuality: the horse-tailed satyrs, often ithyphallic, on the vases of the sixth and fifth centuries, and the lecherous, violent centaurs on the west pediment at Olympia and on the Parthenon metopes (the hybristic licentiousness of the latter is also a theme of tragedy: cf. the rôle of Nessus in the *Trachiniae* and especially 1095-96; also Eur. *H.F.* 181, Pind. *Pyth.* 2. 41ff).

The Bull, of course, is an obvious sexual symbol and, like the horse, is also associated with Poseidon (both bulls and horses are regularly sacrificed to him). Yet its significance in the play may be more complex. Though the Bull is a direct result of Poseidon's intervention, its appearance is also a continued manifestation of Aphrodite's power, for it recalls the bull of Pasiphae, Phaedra's mother. Phaedra herself referred to the legend earlier, for her sex-ridden, guilt-laden ancestry comes out when she confesses her love for Hippolytus:

*Phaed.* Alas, mother, what a love you loved.

*Nurse.* The love she had for the Bull, my child?

Or what is this you mean? (337-38)<sup>45</sup>

Here, then, the force of her love and the violence it has released are again called up in the Bull. Yet in Pasiphae's bull, too, are fused, in sinister fashion, the angered powers of both Poseidon and Aphrodite. Her love for the bull was attributed to both divinities. In one version Aphrodite sent it to punish her; in the other (followed, actually, by Euripides in the *Cretans*) Poseidon sent it to punish Minos.<sup>46</sup>

In the Bull are summed up not merely the powers of Aphrodite and Poseidon, but all the violent instincts within human life and the natural world: the passion of Phaedra, the anger of Theseus, the tenuous basis of control over such "domesticated" animals as the horse. It serves as the symbolic extension of the bestial element in man, his insatiable lusts and unreasoning anger. It recalls too the Minoan passion, pride, and savagery in Phaedra's heredity which Aphrodite could work upon. There is indeed something Minoan — and something animal-like — in the way Phaedra has died: her passionate determination to protect her name and her children, and her wild, ruthless desire to be avenged. Her action came from the springs of her instincts, with its roots in her ancestry (myth makes both Pasiphae and Minos headstrong, passionate, and ruthless; and the *paternal* part of Phaedra's heritage should not be forgotten: Minos also had certain irregularities in his sexual life: *iungitur semper nefas*). The Bull then serves to connect Hippolytus' doom with the deepest roots of Phaedra's passion, and, through her, with Aphrodite's anger.

At the same time, the Bull is the objectification of Theseus' anger, wild, charging blindly, yet an anger also rooted in Aphrodite, in the most primitive and instinctive form of sexual rivalry and jealousy — that between father and son. Theseus is himself strongly subject to Aphrodite: he is a man of passion and a strong sexual temperament, whose numerous amours are well known (Hippolytus is himself the fruit of one of them!). He is, as would be expected, keenly sensitive to the power of sexual desire in men (see 970: τὸ δ' ἄρσεν αὐτοὺς ὠφελεῖ προσκείμενον, and, in general, 966ff). It is partly his own temperament, lustful and passionate, which makes him incapable of believing Hippolytus innocent. Thus, as Matthaei long ago remarked, "Theseus, in a sense, replaces Phaedra and exhibits the malignant aspect of Aphrodite's power in another form."<sup>47</sup> The Bull is the symbol of this new form: as a psychological symbol it is the product of his sexual jealousy and violent anger. Like Aphrodite, it is born from the churning foam, and springs from the symbolical reservoir of elemental forces in the play, the sea.

It is, however, the horses that are the immediate instruments of Hippolytus' death, and the interplay between horses and Bull, on the symbolic level, is complex. Both, through their association with Poseidon, are connected with male sexuality; yet the horses throughout the play are ambiguously connected both with Hippolytus' virgin pursuits and with sexual desire. They are associated with virginity in the metaphor of the virgin as the "untamed" or "unyoked" colt or filly (see 546, πῶλον ἄζυγα; 1425, κόραι γὰρ ἄζυγες γάμων, of the girls who will sing of Hippolytus' fate). Hence the patron of this horse-racing is Artemis, or Dictynna, the virgin goddess (228ff, 1126ff). So, too, Hippolytus' mother, the Amazon devoted to a rigorous and chaste life, is scornfully called "horse-loving" by the sexually preoccupied Phaedra (581). Yet in the first two instances of the metaphor, the maidens are about to give up their virginity (and in the former, through the violence of Eros himself), and in the third, the Amazon's chastity has been violated. In their connection with maidens who are about to know Eros, therefore, the significance of the horses is ambiguous. Hippolytus keeps them in the service of the maiden Artemis, but the impact of the full sexual passion and anger of Phaedra and then of Theseus disturbs the delicate balance in Hippolytus' control over them. It forces him to drive too close to the dangerous border between the two realms, the sand and the sea, Artemis (see 234ff, 1126) and Aphrodite or Poseidon.

It would be perhaps too extreme an application of the symbolism to see in the affrighted horses fleeing before the Bull the inability of

Hippolytus' limited way of life to withstand the reality of the sexual forces he has always denied. Through the horses, nevertheless, he is destroyed by a part of his own life, by something he has reared himself and always believed he could control, yet perhaps did not fully understand. When confronted by the power of the sea and the monster it produces, he is unable to maintain control and is killed. In the destruction, the horses show their other side and in their newly released wildness become the actual instruments of the disaster. Thus Hippolytus' destruction comes both from something that is within his world and something outside of it, something that is basically akin to himself (his very name adumbrates the connection and the tragedy — *furiis direptus equorum*)<sup>48</sup> and something that is antithetical to himself, which he has rejected as foreign to his nature.

It is the interplay between the opposites, however, which gives his fate, and the whole tragedy, its richness. The Bull triggers the latent wildness in the horses, as Theseus had triggered the mounting savagery of the sea. Yet Phaedra, with whom the whole is set into motion, had found in and elicited from Hippolytus a wildness and animal-like cruelty (see above) for which he is to pay many-fold. Thus in a sense the Bull, the *ἄγριον τέρας*, is of his own creation. From another point of view, it could be seen as the projection of his own sexuality, suppressed but returning back upon him with redoubled, irresistible force, before which flight and dismemberment — both physical and psychological, like Pentheus' — are the only results. But Hippolytus is not a Pentheus. His character has still a wholeness, nobility, and humanity through which he can retain a hold upon life long enough to redeem his previous inhumanity by a deepened understanding and a broader generosity.

There is, however, an ironical justice, worthy of the spiteful Aphrodite, in the destruction of the virgin protagonist by this creature of proverbial virility and sexual appetite. The "justice" — or injustice — involved is reflected in another of the images associated with the Bull and the sea: the terrible sound. Hippolytus earlier cried out that "voiceless (*ἄφθογγα*) wild animals" should associate with women (645-46, see above), but it was the voiceless tablet which "shouted" and "gave voice" (877ff). When accused, however, he calls upon the house — *δώματα*, the "house" Aphrodite has destroyed (361, 487) — to give voice (*φθέγγμα*) to his innocence (1074-75). To this Theseus replies with irony that he is taking flight to "voiceless" (*ἄφώνους*) witnesses (1076) and that "the deed, without speaking, lays information" that he is base (1077). The final answer, however, comes from the resounding sea



(ἡχώ, βαρὺν βρόμον, 1201–2) and the terrible “voice” (*phthongos*, 1205; *phthegma*, 1215), with which the whole earth resounds (ἀντεφθέγγετο, 1216). Again, the savagery of his earlier statement about “voiceless beasts (645f) returns upon him redoubled. It is fear of the impassioned shouting of his voice which leads Phaedra to her deed (see 581–82 and 692: πλήσει τε πᾶσαν γαῖαν αἰσχίστων λόγων). And Hippolytus’ own shouting in his interview with the Nurse is perhaps not unlike Theseus’ roar of anger when he reads the tablet (877ff). Thus again the roar of the Bull is, at least in part, his own creation. It is the composite of all the anger and passion — Phaedra’s, Theseus’, Hippolytus’ — which men can release in their moments of unreason, when the primitive animal roar of pain or wrath breaks forth before the articulate human voice can find form for utterance. Hence the voice Hippolytus calls for (1074–75) comes back not as a human voice, speaking truth and justice, but as a bestial roar which drowns out justice, reason, intelligible human speech.<sup>49</sup>

Euripides’ use of the Bull in close connection with the sea thus involves a complex range of associations. Theseus had prayed to Poseidon only to kill his son, not specifying the form; and presumably Hippolytus might have been killed by the sea alone, as was the case in a Troezenian version of the legend.<sup>50</sup> The Bull, however, springs from the sea almost as the spontaneous product of the desires and passions generated among the chief characters. At the same time the Bull’s sexual symbolism expands and deepens the psychological complexities of Hippolytus’ character and his tragedy. It belongs to a level of man’s instinctive life which Hippolytus would deny or repress. It is the embodiment of everything that is not human, yet it is man who calls it up out of the sea.

With the destruction of Hippolytus, Aphrodite’s power is restated in its most triumphant and inclusive form. The ode of 1268–81 gives her the “queenly honor” and power over all the elements of the world:

You, O Kypris, lead the unbending mind of gods and of mortals, and with you flies Eros with wing of many hues, casting about (them) his swiftest wing. He flies over the earth and the deep-sounding salt sea. And upon whose maddened heart he rushes winged with light of gold, him he charms, even the young wild beasts of the mountains and of the sea and all that the earth nourishes and the blazing sun [reading αἰθόμενος] looks upon, and men: over all these, Kypris, in your queenly honor you alone rule.

Again sea is fused with sky, for here, after the manifestation of her power in the sea, in the Messenger’s speech, her companion Eros is likened to a bird, ποικιλόπτερος, flying with “swiftest wing” (1270–71).

The passage evokes the previous bird imagery, especially its association with flight and escape (see esp. 731ff), now proved futile by the power of winged Eros (1272-73). The Nurse's words about Aphrodite in the sea-surge (447-48) are proved more completely and terribly true than she could know. Her subsequent words πάντα δ' ἐκ ταύτης ἔφν, κτλ. (448-50) are also here recalled, on a much deeper and more inclusive level (1276-80). Aphrodite's realm thus includes not only the basic elements of sea and sky, but all aspects of the natural world. The "mountain creatures" point back once more to Hippolytus' quiet mountain retreats and the animals he hunted, now too overwhelmed by and subjected to Aphrodite, as the horses and the land in the preceding scene were overwhelmed by the sea.

This chorus echoes not only the Nurse's words from 447ff, but Aphrodite's own speech which opens the play. Here, as there, her power is said to extend over both gods and mortals (cf. 1-2 and 1268), sea and sky; and the end of the ode reminds us that the power and honor (κράτη, 5; τιμώμενοι, 8) which she demanded of men are now acknowledged to the full (βασιληίδα τιμάν, 1280; μόνα κρατύνεις, 1282).

In the play, of course, it is the recognition of her power by men that is the central theme; and hence they are given special emphasis in the enumeration of the spheres of her dominion. They come, emphatically, last in the series at the beginning of a verse (1280). The position of the phrase itself, however, leaves somewhat ambiguous the reference of the words that come immediately after: ἄνδρας τε συμπάντων βασιληίδα τιμάν / Κύπρι, τῶνδε μόνα κρατύνεις (1280-81). The more obvious and immediate reference of "all those whom you, Kypris . . . rule" is probably all the aspects of the physical world here enumerated. It is also possible (though admittedly less likely with συμπάντων) to take the reference to be to "all *men*," both those who openly admit her power and those who deny it.

The ode occurring at this crucial point presents also a dramatic and essential duality in Aphrodite's nature. This ambiguity is deepened in the stress upon birds and flying, for previously, too, the bird-imagery had an ambiguous significance, expressing both man's hope for escape to a world of untroubled beauty (731ff) and the reality of death (see 828ff and cf. λευκόπτερος, 752, of Phaedra's ship, with ποικιλόπτερος here, 1270). The epithet χρυσοφαῖς (1275) recalls also the amber tears shed for Phaethon in the beautiful West (ἡλεκτροφαεῖς, 741). Yet those gentle tears still belonged to a human world full of sorrow and compassion, whereas the brightness of Eros here has no relation to human feelings. It simply marks his power over all of creation, including men. The

beauty of Eros — and Aphrodite — thus only stands out the more sharply against the destruction they have caused; and it is significant for the meaning of the tragedy that Euripides has placed this rich ode on their beauty and their creative agency in all of life at the point where their destructive potentialities have been most in evidence.

Artemis' entrance here, immediately after the hymn to Aphrodite, is something of a *coup de théâtre*. It also re-emphasizes the basic conflict of the play, the opposition of the two goddesses, at the point when that opposition has completed its destruction of human life. Yet even Artemis continues to bear witness to the power of the sea, blaming Theseus' use of his gift from his "sea father" (πατήρ . . . πόντιος, 1318) and exclaiming to him, at the end of her speech, "these evils have broken upon you" (σοὶ τὰδ' ἔρρωγεν κακά, 1338). This verb from Homer on is used of the "breaking" of waves. Aeschylus' *Persae* (433) provides a close parallel: κακῶν πέλαγος ἔρρωγεν.

In recalling the sea, moreover, the goddess who has come ostensibly to soothe the pain of the human tragedy also takes up the familiar theme of the closing off of escape. She addresses Theseus aggressively thus (1290-93):

How will you not hide your form in shame beneath the earth or taking wing upward (πτηνὸς ἄνω) not change your life and hold your foot outside of this grief.

The familiar image of flight here reflects the total impossibility of the once longed-for escape now that disaster and "grief" have closed about the human protagonists. The sky which Hippolytus invoked with his goddess at the beginning (οὐρανίαν Ἀρτεμιν, 59-60), connected perhaps with his own form of "escape" from the complex reality of human life, is now possessed, like the sea, by the opposite and rejected power.

The final opposition between this broader, more violent reality and the unreality of the previous wishes is again stated, in the exodos, through the theme of prayer. What both Theseus and Hippolytus pray for now is death. When Theseus hears Artemis' words he can only utter δέσποιν', ὀλοίμην (1325), echoing perhaps the ὀλοίμην of Hippolytus' oath which Theseus would not believe (1028). Hippolytus himself now prays for death to come as healer, Παιάν (1373) and for Hades to bring him to his final rest (1386ff), while Theseus wishes again to die, to be a corpse instead of his son (1410).

Hippolytus' last wish, however, is both the most impossible and the most terrible. Hippolytus wishes men could curse the gods:

εἴθ' ἦν ἀραῖον δαίμοσιν βροτῶν γένος. (1415)

This wish, coming from the "pious" (see 1419) Hippolytus, takes even Artemis aback, and she cautions, ἔασον (1416). Yet, while the most fanciful of all the wishes, it is, in a sense, the most real and tragic statement in the play. It completes now his companions' earlier hesitation about a divine Providence or Intelligence (1102ff) and reflects the total futility and helplessness of human effort and aspiration, all of man's bitterness and despair toward a universe in which he can see nothing but capriciously destructive, jealous, and pitiless powers.

Prayer, then, becomes, at the last, curse, and as such recalls the curses (ἀραί, 888, etc.; cf. ἀραῖον here) which Theseus called down upon his son. It sums up the futility of wish and prayer, perhaps of hope itself. All the wishes turn out to be totally impossible of fulfillment (as in the "escape" ode); or else they are fulfilled only if they are destructive (Theseus' curse, Hippolytus' oath in 1028ff); or, if positive, they are fulfilled in a negative way. Thus Hippolytus' prayer to Artemis at the beginning (85-87),

With you I associate and converse with words, hearing your voice but seeing your face not. And as I began, so may I round the end of my life  
τέλος δὲ κάμψαιμι ὥσπερ ἡρξάμην βίου,

is fulfilled with a bitter reversal at the end. He does, in a sense, end his life as he began, conversing with Artemis, and "seeing her face not" (see 1391ff, where the dying youth infers his goddess' presence from the perfume — ὦ θεῖον ὀσμῆς πνεῦμα — but presumably cannot see her: cf. also Soph. *Ajax*, 14ff). Yet his τέλος βίου is far different from what he has prayed for, and fulfillment has come not through the goddess to whom he prayed, but through her opposite, to whom he refused prayer. All hope to escape reality is thus confronted with a more basic and bitter reality. The only thing men can pray for in the end is death, or the power to curse the gods, which is tantamount to cursing life.

It is, of course, in Aphrodite that the complex nature of this inescapable reality is reflected, though Artemis will play Aphrodite's role in some future tragedy (see 1420ff). Hence this last part of the play also adumbrates the ambiguity of the love-goddess. Love and death fuse in Hippolytus' appeal for death in language which recalls the erotic roots of his disaster. He speaks of his "love (ἔραμαι) for the double-edged spear (λόγχας)" to put to sleep (ἐνᾶσαι) his life 1375ff (cf. also κοιμάσειε, 1386). The longing for the spear recalls Phaedra's desire for it at the beginning of the play (see ἐπίλογον, 221; ἔραμαι, 219, etc.). Artemis speaks of his being "yoked" (συνεζύγης, 1389) to his disaster, an image with familiar erotic associations (cf. ἄζυγα, 546; ἄζυγες, 1425).



Finally, when Hippolytus is about to die, his request, "raise my body" (κατόρθωσον δέμας, 1445), echoes the languor of the lovesick Phaedra earlier (cf. 198: ἄρατέ μου δέμας, ὀρθοῦτε κάρα), and recalls the carrying out of her lifeless body (ὀρθώσατ' ἐκτείνοντες ἄθλιον νέκυν, 786).<sup>51</sup> Indeed, Hippolytus' pitiful state at the end, his entrance among companions who bear his almost lifeless body, is vaguely parallel to Phaedra's entrance, in a state of collapse and near to death, at the beginning (see, e.g. 199: λέλυμαι μελέων σύνδεσμα φίλων). These connections suggest again the tragic interweaving of the deaths of the protagonists, the ambiguity of who is agent and who is victim, and the power of love to destroy both the lover and the beloved. The circle is thus closed, and Hippolytus in his death reenacts horribly the languid condition — the weakness and helplessness — of the woman whose love, scorned, has killed him, and herself.<sup>52</sup> Yet against the goddess whose will comprises the indifferent interplay of elemental opposites, love and death, procreation and destruction, the human characters come to assert their own humanity. As Knox has well said, the forgiveness that passes between them is "an affirmation of human values in an inhuman universe."<sup>53</sup> In this mutual forgiveness both father and son discover a lost basis of understanding and love. And in finding one another, each loses something of his previous intransigence and limitation of feeling. This change is already working within Theseus even before Hippolytus confirms it and adds to it his own. Theseus' first reaction to the news of Hippolytus' death was triumph, almost joy, at the fulfillment of his prayer (1169ff); and he met the first announcement of the Messenger with the cruel remark, "At whose hand? Did he fall into the hatred of someone whose wife he violated, like his father's?" (1164–65). After the full account of his death, however, he softens, admits the tie of blood (οὐνεκ' ἐστὶν ἐξ ἐμοῦ), and states that he no longer either rejoices or is grieved (1259–60). He still wishes, however, to "examine him with words" (λόγοις τ' ἐλέγξω, 1267) and refute his previous denial of the deed. Artemis, however, taking up this phrase, reveals Theseus' own culpability in not having "examined" (οὐκ ἤλεγξας) the matter more fully through divine and human means (1321ff). She cannot absolve or forgive his guilt, only set forth, objectively, the way through which absolution, or at least mitigation of guilt, might come: "First your ignorance of your error looses you from baseness; and, second, your wife in dying took away examinations of words" (λόγων ἐλέγχους, 1335–37). The repeated expression "examine" (or "examine with words") points up the hastiness and irrationality of Theseus' previous action, and traces his share in the disaster to the unchecked and "unexamined" release of his

anger. He who, in his wrath, would not believe his son's repeated oaths that he was not *κακός* (1031, 1075, 1191),<sup>54</sup> is proved himself *κακός* in the eyes of both the goddess and the son: *σὺ δ' ἔν τ' ἐκείνῳ κἂν ἐμοὶ φαίνη κακός* (1320). He comes, however, to repent fully; but only Hippolytus, the victim, can forgive him for his anger (*τί δ' ; ἔκτανές τ' αὖ μ' , ὥς τότ' ἦσθ' ὠργισμένος*, 1413) and absolve him (see 1449 and 1335). The anger (*ὀργαί*, 1418) of Aphrodite, however, is unforgivable, and Hippolytus wishes to curse her as his father cursed him (1415). Men can forgive one another, but they cannot forgive the gods any more than the gods can forgive them. To cite Knox once more, "These gods are, in both the literal and metaphorical senses of the word, inhuman."<sup>55</sup> Their inhumanity, however, is the resisting matter of the universe against which man's humanity comes to life.

Thus Hippolytus, who showed himself Theseus' son negatively in his impulsive and pitiless dismissal of Phaedra and total lack of attempt to understand her suffering, recognizes his kinship to his father at a deeper and more meaningful level. To reach this recognition, however, he must suffer from his father the same cruelty and anger which he showed to Phaedra. The impulsiveness and vehemence of the two men make the reconciliation all the more significant, as well as psychologically possible. This reconciliation in turn helps redeem their previous callousness and is the more moving and tragic coming after they have suffered the full consequences of their rash natures. Theseus' blind wrath made him incapable of pity for his son. As he threatened to drive Hippolytus from the palace with his own hand, his final words were, "For no pity (*οἶκτος*) for your exile comes upon me" (1089).<sup>56</sup> Now, however, it is the father who is an object of pity to his son; and the son gives the pity he was himself formerly denied:

I lament too then my father's disasters . . . Alas, most wretched for this misfortune, father . . . I lament your error for you more than for me . . .  
(1405, 1407, 1409)<sup>57</sup>

And as Hippolytus rediscovers Theseus as father, Theseus recognizes him, finally, as son:

Θη. ὦ φίλταθ', ὥς γενναῖος ἐκφαίνη πατρί.  
Ιπ. τοιῶνδε παίδων γνησίων εὖχου τυχεῖν.  
[with Wilamowitz' transposition]

*Thes.* O dearest one, how noble you show yourself toward  
your father.

*Hipp.* Pray to find your legitimate children thus.

(1452, 1455)

In this recognition, each finds a new level of humanity in both himself and the other.

The reconciliation, spreading from father to son, touches even Phaedra, who, though not actually forgiven, is at least explicitly included among the victims (1404) and given a part in the future cult-song about Hippolytus (1430).<sup>58</sup> Indeed the language with which Theseus pardons his father recalls and cancels some of the inhumanity in his violent rejection of Phaedra. His nobility in not leaving his father's hand "impure" (*ἀναγνον*, 1448) stands at the opposite extreme from the self-righteous and narrow priggishness in his denunciation of Phaedra: "How then would I be base who think I am impure (*οὐδ'* . . . *ἀγνεύειν δοκῶ*) if I but hear such things" (654-55).

Whatever positive element the tragedy contains, however, appears in the contrast between Phaedra's death and Hippolytus'. She died "betrayed" (590, 591, 595) by the Nurse and, in a sense, by Hippolytus. Hippolytus at the end holds firm in his father's entreaty not to be "betrayed" (*μή νυν προδῶς με, τέκνον, ἀλλὰ καρτέρει*, 1456). Her death came amid hatred and anger, as her love turned to the lust for vengeance; and in its train it brought only more hatred, anger, and death — all the violence which the sea and the Bull symbolize. Although this violence, and the tragic waste and loss it entails, cannot be wiped out, they are at least in part mitigated by the love, the understanding, and the deeper avowal of kinship at Hippolytus' death.

But the gods do not forgive, nor do they wish to be touched by human suffering (see 1437-39). Artemis may provide the objective material out of which the humanity and forgiveness may grow, but in herself she is indifferent and remote, even cruel so far as Theseus is concerned. She can state coldly that Theseus' ignorance excuses him (1334-35); but only Hippolytus can speak the personal, emotionally effective, and truly comforting absolution: "I free you from this death of mine" (*σε τοῦδ' ἐλευθερῶ φόνου*, 1449). Contrast the way in which Artemis speaks her "absolution." She uses the third-personal, abstract form of statement *τὸ μὴ εἰδέναι* . . . *ἐκλύει κάκης* (1335), which is itself given as part of a logical enumeration, *πρῶτον μὲν* . . . *ἔπειτα δέ*, in the remote, cool language of a judge (1334-37). Scholars of recent years have thus rightly criticized older interpretations which saw in her appearance all sweetness and light, serenity and divine pity.<sup>59</sup> She does, it is true, ask Hippolytus to forgive Theseus<sup>60</sup>; yet it is after her departure, when the two men are left alone with their suffering, that they turn to one another, father and son, and make the most significant, and for Hippolytus the final, discovery of their lives.

Artemis thus remains true to her nature, as Aphrodite to hers: she is still the goddess of the wild, of the non-human world. Her only words of comfort are that the gods do not rejoice at the death of pious mortals (1339-40), and she can but assure Hippolytus that he dies dear to her:

*Iπ.* οὐκ ἔστι σοι κυναγὸς οὐδ' ὑπηρέτης,  
*Αρ.* οὐ δῆτ'· ἀτὰρ μοι προσφιλὴς γ' ἀπόλλυσαι. (1397-98)

*Hipp.* No longer have you hunter or servant.

*Art.* No; but you die dear to me.

It is part of Hippolytus' tragedy that he, whose death resulted from his very devotion to Artemis and from something of her "wildness" in his treatment of Phaedra, should find his goddess true to her nature at the end: "Easily you leave a long association (*δμιλίαν*)," he chides (1441), and his words recall Aphrodite's spiteful warning in the prologue about his "falling in with more than mortal association" (*μεῖζω βροτείας . . . δμιλίας*, 19). But Artemis by her nature can do nothing else, and it is only at her departure and the unsolaced approach of his own death that Hippolytus discovers his own humanity. Her departure thus marks symbolically his relinquishment of the wild which he has loved and in which he has lived.<sup>61</sup> His death is thus also the rebirth of his humanity.

The conclusion of the play, then, does contain positive elements, but it is far from optimistic. The tragic mixture of grief and compassion, of humanity gained at the price of suffering and death, is suggested in the image with which the play ends, significantly an image of the sea:

A common grief to all the citizens this came unexpectedly. There will be a rhythmic plashing of many tears (*πολλῶν δακρύων ἔσται πίτυλος*); for the stories of the great that are worthy of grief are more wont to endure (1462-67).

The word *πίτυλος* introduces a common, but complex metaphor that is practically untranslatable. It is used figuratively of the rhythmic beating of breasts or falling of tears in lamentation, but literally denotes the regular sound of the oars produced by the coordinated efforts of the rowers as on a trireme.<sup>62</sup> Hence it is well used here to mark the human social world (cf. *κοινὸν . . . πᾶσι πολίταις*, 1462) which thus expresses its common participation in grief and loss. It was in terms of the whole society that Hippolytus' death was first announced (see *πολίταις*, 1168-69), and the tale of his disaster will be preserved in a social context (1423ff). His fellow-citizens are capable of feeling and lamenting his suffering as a god cannot. The goddess who cannot weep (*ὀρώ· κατ' ὄσσων δ' οὐ θέμις βαλεῖν δάκρυ*, 1396) can give only the "greatest



grievings" of *others'* tears for his sufferings (πένθη μέγιστα δακρύων καρπουμένω, 1427). The rhythmical lament and falling tears of the chorus, therefore (see δακρύων, ἄξιοσπενθείς, 1464-65), are the human equivalent for the goddess' gift. At the same time these are bitter tears, unmitigated by the gentle unreality of the wished-for world of the "escape" ode and hence not transformed into the beautiful brightness of amber, like those shed by Phaethon's sisters "into the swelling sea of their father" (738-41). In the *pitylos*-image grief and tears are again associated with the sea, but without any suggestion that the sea provides comfort or consolation.

This image, on the contrary, sharpens the juxtaposition between the human world and the elemental forces which have crashed destructively into it. It evokes all the power of the sea and the whole sequence of the previous imagery, the "shipwreck" or storm in terms of which the coming disaster of Phaedra was presented (see 36, 140, 155ff, 315, 752ff, etc.), and the wreck of Theseus too upon a "sea of troubles" (822ff). Most poignantly, it recalls the description of the doomed Hippolytus as a steersman who has lost control of his ship (see 1221, 1224, 1227). As the image for the measured sound of man's control over one of the elements of his world, the *πίτυλος* points up, finally, man's helplessness against the measureless and the uncontrollable.<sup>63</sup>

It is this lament, then, which answers the previous attempts to control or escape the sea. Like the Hunters' song earlier (1102-10), it marks a sadder but more realistic acceptance of all that the sea implies. Hippolytus' attempt to resist its elemental force is only reflected tragically back upon him in the oar-like beat of the lamentation at his death. Yet this lament combines in itself the images both of human weakness and of the possibility of human compassion. In its sea-like rhythm it acknowledges the uncontrollable and the non-human, yet transmutes its violence into pity. Thus the *πίτυλος* reasserts another side of man's capacity for "measure." It re-solidifies man's social bond against the unknown and gives final and enduring expression to the human — and humanizing — side of grief and loss, the compassionate understanding to which men, through suffering, can rise.

The god-sent violence of the sea thus overwhelms human life and when calm returns leaves behind a wreckage in which the only sound is the slow, steady lament, like the strokes of the oar. He who rejected what the sea meant is destroyed by it, yet is himself mourned in terms of it. It remains as the symbol for the realities, more bitter than consoling, surrounding human life, the realities which, like the gods, endure eternally while the individual life comes and passes away.

Through the sea, then, we come back to the question of the nature of the gods raised at the beginning of this study. Aphrodite is not only in the sea, but of the sea. The sea is the necessary correlative of her power and nature, the demanding nature of the reality of our world. Hence its imagistic function in the play is indispensable for establishing the scope of the action. Through the imagery of the sea the problematical rôle of the gods is raised above the question of Euripides' "religion" to become a mirror for the broader questions of the nature of human existence, human action, and the "total reality" amid which human life is lived.<sup>64</sup>

Commentators have, of course, objected ceaselessly to this "de-humanization" of the gods.<sup>65</sup> Yet it is essential to the tragic action that the powers against which the protagonists struggle and to which, ultimately, they yield be inhuman, pitiless, totally regardless of man's constructs and his ideals. These powers and their poetic embodiment in the wild sea serve as the foil for the humanity that is finally affirmed and as the measure of the effort involved in the affirmation.

In the sharpness and bitterness of this polarity lies one of the basic differences between Sophoclean and Euripidean drama. In Sophocles we may feel that the gods are somehow responsible for human suffering, as in the *Oedipus Rex* or in the statement that ends the *Trachiniae*, "There is nothing of this that is not Zeus" (1278). But their responsibility in Sophocles is vaguer and less pointed. His gods are less intelligible in terms of human passions and more remote from human life. They look upon man's suffering across the cold, vast distances of space, like the constellations moving for eternity along their "circling paths" (see *Trach.* 130-31). For him, then, the definition of humanity comes exclusively through man, his greatness and his blindness, and the uncertainty of his life, and not, as in Euripides, through the opposition between man and a divine inhumanity.

The prologue of the *Ajax* perhaps comes closest to the *Hippolytus* in depicting a pitiless divinity (note especially the contrast between Athena and Odysseus, 118ff); but even Sophocles' Athena is far from the wanton spite of Euripides' Aphrodite. Her rôle in the play is much less significant, and her wrath is not unjust (see 760ff) and, perhaps, not inexorable (see 756-57). In Euripides, on the other hand, given this divine inhumanity, the affirmation of humanity is necessarily more tenuous, hesitant, and uncertain. It is perhaps doubtful whether the human compassion asserted in the last scene of the *Hippolytus* is an adequate or fully satisfying counter-force to the divine indifference. The dirge is nevertheless *something*. It is the final term in the progression

from the wild shouting of Hippolytus (581ff) and the rancorous letter of Phaedra which "shouts" though silent (877ff) to the ritual songs of the disaster to be sung by the Troezenian girls (1423ff) and the pain-wrung forgiveness of the son-victim toward the agent-father. But it marks perhaps the ultimate helplessness of man in such a world. To be human means to die at the hands of the gods, but it also means to be able to lament.

The divinities of the *Hippolytus*, then, possess both the indifference and the power of the elements with which they are associated (in fact the *combination* of indifference and power defines in large part their divinity); and these elements, sea and woodland, come to play as large a symbolic role in the action as the gods themselves. Together they comprise a whole, no part of which can man neglect or seek to "escape" without incurring the risk of its striking back. It is this "wholeness" of the world which makes it dangerous to men. The Greeks generally did not separate the positive and negative aspects of divinity. Apollo is the god who cures diseases as well as he who sends them; and Dionysus is a god "most terrible" as well as "most mild" (*Bacch.* 861).<sup>66</sup> The gods thus themselves contain something of the duality of the natural world, both life-giving and destructive.

These antinomies in the gods, which are therefore the antinomies faced by human life, run throughout the play. Love is "sweetest and painful at the same time" (348), and so its goddess brings both *eros* and *thanatos*. Destructive and spiteful in the prologue, she is hymned as a beautiful and life-giving power just after she has done her worst.<sup>67</sup> And Phaedra, who enters determined to die, surrenders to Aphrodite with the return of her desire to live (see 441ff, "Will you then because of love destroy your life" . . .). Yet, through Aphrodite, she generates death on a wider and more violent scale. Similarly, as Aphrodite's sea can be warm and soothing in the parodos, and violent and destructive as the action develops, so too the peace and removal of the woodland has its negative aspect in some of the imagery associated with Hippolytus (see 646-47, 689).

Conversely, there is the suggestion of a similar duality in Artemis. As Aphrodite is associated both with the joyous, creative release of sexual energy and with its thoughtless, blind violence, so Artemis, the cold, chaste goddess, can be called upon as the gentle helper of women in childbirth (161-69).<sup>68</sup> The play presents us with the paradoxical associations of Aphrodite and death, Artemis and birth. Artemis too is associated with the sea (148ff, 229), the element of her enemy and opposite. Indeed, in the exodos she seems to share Aphrodite's sea-



qualities, with her indifference to the "third" victim (1404) and her willingness to involve, on her own initiative, a fourth (1420ff). She seems, furthermore, to have been worshiped at Troezen as a goddess who saves from the sea and it is perhaps to this aspect of her that Phaedra refers in 229, "Lady Artemis of Limne by the sea."<sup>69</sup> She is thus Hippolytus' goddess in her association with both woodland and "Limne by the sea." Another Troezenian legend, however, involves her in the death, by the sea, of one of her followers, also a hunter: Saron, for whom was named the sea from which death comes to Hippolytus (1200).<sup>70</sup> Thus despite the basic opposition between the two goddesses there is, as several scholars have noted, a terrible likeness between them,<sup>71</sup> which on the psychological level perhaps signifies something of the ambivalence of the human mind toward the elemental passions and desires it must both live with and repress. Phaedra, possessed by Aphrodite, longs for the purity of her opposite; and Hippolytus, serving the chaste Artemis and desiring the calm woodlands and removal from human affairs (see 1013ff),<sup>72</sup> denounces sex with a vehemence which itself violates the severe *sophrosyne* he supposes himself to possess.

On another level this "likeness" between the two goddesses expresses the ineluctable "wholeness," the unity in complementaries, of the elemental world. Men may try to divide up this wholeness against itself, to transform it mentally by claiming to worship one of its aspects, though, as in Phaedra's case, they may only be using the opposite to conceal the power to which they are really subject. Yet whatever divided forms this "reality" takes in the human mind, its wholeness is still inescapable. That which is longed for becomes that which destroys. Phaedra's love for Hippolytus causes her death, just as his devotion to Artemis causes his. She seals her death with an oath in the name of the goddess opposite to the one to whom she is in fact bound (*σεμνήν* "Αρτεμιν, 713-14) and with words which repeat the prayer of her beloved's chaste followers (see 61ff). His death comes from the forces he has most resisted, the wildness of the sea, the sexuality of the Bull, and from the creatures he has reared and loved. Thus the ambiguities in both Aphrodite and Artemis and the interplay between them reveal how easily and mysteriously *eros* leads to *thanatos*, how one instinct leads to its opposite, and how dangerous and complex generally are the basic instincts, even the life-instincts, that rule our existence.

It is this complexity, this dangerous "wholeness," which Hippolytus seeks to ignore or "escape." Perhaps there is even an aspect of the goddess he worships, and worships exclusively, which he does not know, just as he does not know an aspect of the horses he trains in her



service. She is invoked, as we have seen, as the goddess of childbirth; and it is significant that Hippolytus specifically denounces childbirth, like everything connected with sex, in the most violent and extravagant terms (618–24). In this he denies the most immediate of the realities of life, the act wherein men are most bound to the necessities of their animal nature, where the boundary between the controlled human world and the wild, pain-filled world of the beasts is narrowest. Thus he refuses to know a basic aspect of his goddess, one wherein she too is perhaps touched by the wildness of the sea, the inevitable risks of man's participation in the process of creating life. To these risks the women of the chorus are closer, as women have always been. (Euripides also appears, atypically for his society, highly sensitive to the supposed *ἀκίνδυνον βίον* of women: *Medea* 248–51.) Hence they can find the sea gentle and peaceful in the parode, while Hippolytus, abominating women, is to know only its violence. In seeking to banish the creative powers of life, he renders inevitable his full exposure to its destructive powers. Indeed, his chief occupation, the hunt, is destructive, and again serves only a partial aspect of his goddess, the *πότνια θηρῶν*, the goddess connected with wild animal life. The Artemis whom the women know and invoke, however, is the complement, not the enemy of Aphrodite. She wields the bow (167), but also gives good births (*εὖλοχον*, 166). Thus it is the gentle, pitying, life-giving aspect of his goddess, as she manifests herself to women, which Hippolytus ignores; and hence he is destroyed by her complement, also a goddess of life, in her most cruel and inhuman form.

Hippolytus' rejection or ignorance of this other aspect of Artemis is, of course, deliberate. His life is a pure expression of the masculine desire to re-form his world, to make himself as free as possible of the physical and animal exigencies of his existence, to which women must yield (or at least from which they can less easily escape). Hence, to assert his freedom he must reject them and their bondage to the creation of life. His freedom is ultimately the spiritual freedom men have always sought, and the search cannot be but tragic.<sup>73</sup> There is an element of true idealism in his aims and in his uncompromising rigidity (his *akribeia*) which contrasts favorably with the Nurse's amoral expediency or the Chorus' wish for easy adaptability, wealth, and principles that are not too firm (see III Iff).<sup>74</sup>

Yet in his "idealism" he is opposed by one of the strongest and most relentless realities of physical existence, symbolically associated with the equally forceful and resistless power of the sea. In trying to resist, Hippolytus almost destroys his own humanity, only to rediscover it at

his death and with it his own tie, rooted in physical generation, to his father. With his humanity and compassion he triumphs, as a man, over the wildness of the sea. But as his body is borne away, it is the rhythm of the sea that echoes behind him as a dirge.

## NOTES

1. I shall refer to the following works henceforth by author's name only: Lester Crocker, "On Interpreting *Hippolytus*," *Philologus* 101 (1957) 238-46; E. R. Dodds, "The *Aidos* of Phaedra and the Meaning of the *Hippolytus*," *CR* 39 (1925) 102-4; L. H. G. Greenwood, *Aspects of Euripidean Tragedy* (Cambridge 1953); G. M. A. Grube, *The Drama of Euripides* (London 1941; reprint, New York 1961); Hans Herter, "Theseus und Hippolytos," *RhM* 89 (1940) 273-92; H. D. F. Kitto, *Greek Tragedy* (London 1939); B. M. W. Knox, "The *Hippolytus* of Euripides," *YCS* 13 (1952) 3-31; Albin Lesky, *Die tragische Dichtung der Hellenen* (Göttingen 1956); L. E. Matthaëi, *Studies in Greek Tragedy* (Cambridge 1918); Louis Méridier, *Euripide*, II ("Société d'Édition, 'Les Belles Lettres,'" Paris 1927); Gilbert Norwood, *Essays on Euripidean Drama* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1954); Max Pohlenz, *Die griechische Tragödie*, ed. 2 (Göttingen 1954); W. H. Roscher, ed., *Ausführliches Lexikon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie* (Leipzig 1884ff); U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorf, *Griechische Tragödien übersetzt*, I (Berlin 1899); R. P. Winnington-Ingram, "Hippolytus: A Study in Causation," in *Euripide: Entretiens sur l'antiquité classique*, VI (Fondation Hardt, Geneva 1960) 171-97. The text used is that of Gilbert Murray (Oxford 1902; reprint 1951). Fragments are cited after A. Nauck, *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta*, ed. 2 (Leipzig 1889). For a recent bibliography of the *Hippolytus* see Lesky, *ibid* 165-66. I have touched upon some aspects of the imagery in a more general context in my essay, "Nature and the World of Man in Greek Literature," *Arion* vol. 2, no. 1 (1963) 41-42.

2. The adequacy of the human motivation is stressed by Greenwood 44ff; Norwood 106ff; Winnington-Ingram, 183; Pohlenz, I 272 (all in n.1 above), and many others. For the relation of human and divine in the play see in general the principle stated by Lesky, 168: "... Hier nicht vom Menschlichen aus die Götter gesucht werden, sondern die göttlichen Gestalten den Menschen verständlich machen sollen, auf den es dem Dichter ganz vorwiegend ankommt." Similarly, Winnington-Ingram, 188-89: "It is by the tragedy that we understand the gods, not by the gods that we understand the tragedy."

3. The view that Euripides' purpose in the *Hippolytus* is primarily to satirize the gods has been most fully restated in recent years by Greenwood, chap. 2, *passim*.

4. So Méridier (above, n.1) 23: "Par elles [the two goddesses] la tragédie acquiert une ampleur singulière."

5. See Norwood (above, n.1) 109. This view is perhaps most fully elaborated by Knox (above, n.1) *passim*.

6. There is a full and interesting statement of the "advantages" enjoyed by the ancient poet in this regard in Wilamowitz' introduction to his translation (above, n.1) 110-11: "Aber er [the Greek poet] bedient sich des ungeheuren Vorteils, dass er die höchst realen ewigen Mächte, die in dem sittlichen Leben der Menschen walten, nicht als körperlose Abstraktionen belassen muss, wie sie

sich dem Denken darstellen, noch zu symbolischen Schatten aus eigner Phantasie gestalten muss: die Phantasie seines Volkes beut sie ihm dar als leibhaftige Götter, zu Personen, man möchte sagen von Fleisch und Blut, ausgestaltet in der ununterbrochenen dichterischen Arbeit von Jahrhunderten. . . . Lebenserfahrung und Gewissen lehren uns gewiss die tiefe Wahrheit, dass die Negation des Geschlechtstriebes nicht gut ist. . . . Aber wie grau und blass sind diese Gedanken gegenüber der Erscheinung Aphrodites. Die Göttin spricht das alles gar nicht aus. Ihren Willen spricht sie aus, ganz konkret, als mitthätige Person des Dramas," etc. See also Pohlenz (above, n.1) I 273-74: "... Für den Dramatiker war es ein einziger Vorteil, wenn er statt der schwer darstellbaren göttlichen Liebesmacht die Aphrodite des Volksglaubens einführen konnte, die sofort in jedem Zuschauer bestimmte Vorstellungen wachrief."

7. Norwood (above, n.1) 104 and 105 respectively.

8. Critics of the "symbolist" approach, like Greenwood, often distort the possible symbolic roles of figures like Aphrodite or elements like the sea by viewing them apart from the poetic fabric of the whole work and only in terms of plot, as if this were the only significant part of the work. They then detach the element in question and ask, What does it represent? See, for instance, Greenwood's discussion of Poseidon (p. 42): "Poseidon could of course represent the sea and all that is therein. . . . But how could the sea and its inhabitants be subject to the will of Theseus so as to become the instruments of his vengeance?" To try to give a single, final meaning to something like the sea in the *Hippolytus* is to misunderstand the nature of poetry. The sea does not "represent" Aphrodite any more than Poseidon "represents" the sea.

9. For the connection of Aeschylus' *Danaïds* and Euripides frag. 898 with the Aphrodite of the *Hippolytus*, see Matthaei (above, n.1) 80; also Kitto (above, n.1) 202; Pohlenz (above, n.1) I 274. For this "elemental" aspect of Aphrodite, see also R. Y. Hathorn, "Rationalism and Irrationalism in Euripides' *Hippolytus*," *CJ* 52 (1957) 215ff.

10. Thus Kitto's limitation of Aphrodite to an "internal" power seems to lose one of the dimensions of the tragedy: "It is of course because Aphrodite is this, an internal not an external tyrant, that the *Hippolytus* is a tragedy. She is not a 'goddess' who torments us for her sport" (201, note 1). Yet, in a sense, she *does* so torment us, for her jealousy, if not "for her sport."

11. See Norwood (above, n.1) 102ff. He goes on to distinguish two aspects of Aphrodite in Euripides' mind: for the poet she is a "world-goddess" (104), for the philosopher, "a spurious deity" (105). See also Matthaei, 46-47.

12. See, for example, Greenwood, (above, n.1) 45 and Wilamowitz (above, n.1) 112.

13. For the beauty of the calm sea cf. *Hel.* 1451ff, *I.T.* 421ff. For its association with violent passion cf. *H.F.* 861 and frag. 1089, where an angry woman is compared to the sea. For the significance of the sea in Attic tragedy generally, see Albin Lesky, *Thalatta* (Vienna 1947) 215ff. For its connection with violent forces, see esp. 227-29, and for the sea in Euripides in general, 246ff, with the bibliographical references in notes 261 and 294.

14. The theme of the *parthenos* is a recurrent motif in the play. Hippolytus maintains his "virgin soul" in the face of his father's accusations (1006) and is to be immortalized finally in the songs of maidens (*parthenoi*, 1428). Artemis speaks also of her "maidenly joy" in opposition to Aphrodite (1302). On the



other hand, Phaedra, when struggling to maintain her honor and virtue, speaks of time's revealing the evil men "as if holding up a mirror before a young maiden" (429).

15. The chorus' invocation to Artemis as *σεμνοτάτα* (61) perhaps also helps establish the association between the goddess and her follower, described shortly after as *semnos* (see 93ff), though in a far more negative sense (see also 957, 1064, 1364).

16. For the parallel between 77 and 563 see Knox (above, n.1) 28.

17. For the role of *aidos* in the tragedy see Dodds (above, n.1) 102-4. For the religious nature of Hippolytus' *aidos* and its connections with his "untouched meadow" and his *sophrosyne*, see A.-J. Festugière, *Personal Religion among the Greeks*, Sather Classical Lectures XXVI (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1954) 12-13.

18. For Dictynna see "Britomartis" in Roscher, I.1 (1884-86) 822ff. Also Jessen, "Diktynna," *RE* 9 (1903) 584ff.

19. See Wilamowitz (above, n.1) 178 (*ad vs.* 150): "Die Beziehung auf das auch 228 und 1132 gennante Lokal Limne konnte nur Verstocktheit noch leugnen."

20. For Artemis' arrows in her revenge, see Knox (above, n.1) 30-31.

21. For the erotic implications of the "meadow" here see Knox (above, n.1) 6, note 8, citing Eur. *Cycl.* 171. Compare Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis* 229ff. Ovid puts a similar metaphor, with deliberate erotic implications, into the mouth of his Phaedra: *Heroides* 4. 29-30. So too the *belos* which Phaedra wishes to hold and hurl (220-22) may have erotic connotations. Note its explicit connection later with Eros 530.

22. The reading *δέσποινα δίας . . . Λίμνας* found in some manuscripts is surely only a scribal error for the much more appropriate *δέσποινα ἁλίας . . . Λίμνας*, *Δ* and *Δ* lending themselves easily to such a confusion, compounded by a misdivision of the words.

23. For the erotic association of the horse here see Knox (above, n.1) p. 6 with note 8, citing Anacreon frag. 75 D. See also Horace *Odes* 3.11.9ff.

24. The pattern of the alternating relaxation and heightening of tension is well noted by Matthaei (above, n.1) 86, 89-90, and *passim*.

25. See, for example, ps.-Longinus, *De Sublim.* 26-27, on τῶν προσώπων ἀντιμετάθεσις.

26. Compare φοιτᾷ γὰρ καὶ διὰ λίμνας of Dictynna in 149 with φοιτᾷ δ' ἄν', αἰθέρ', κ.τ.λ. of Aphrodite in 447. The parallel is noted also by Grube (above, n.1) 182, note 2.

27. This passage on the power of *eros* among gods and men may be modeled on the earlier *Hippolytos Kalyptomenos*: see frag. 431, where men and gods, gods and sea, are juxtaposed as victims and subjects of Eros, and Zeus is also mentioned:

"Ερως γὰρ ἄνδρας οὐ μόνους ἐπέρχεται  
οὐδ' αὖ γυναικάς, ἀλλὰ καὶ θεῶν ἄνω  
ψυχὰς χαράσσει καπὶ πόντον ἔρχεται.  
καὶ τόνδ' ἀπείργειν οὐδ' ὁ παγκρατὴς σθένει  
Ζεὺς, ἀλλ' ὑπείκει καὶ θέλων ἐγκλίνεται.

28. The point of Phaedra's surrender of her will to the Nurse is well made by Knox (above, n.1) 11: "She is now a child again, and the Nurse does for the



grown woman what she had always done for the child — evades her questions, makes light of her fears, relieves her of responsibility, and decides for her." Phaedra, however, must still bear the guilt and the consequences of her acquiescence, passive though it may be, to the Nurse's scheme. Euripides leaves it ambiguous — intentionally, it would seem — as to what Phaedra thinks these *pharmaka* will do, dispel her passion or get her the man. D. J. Conacher, "A Problem in Euripides' *Hippolytus*," *TAPA* 92 (1961) 37-44, seems to go too far in maintaining the former and making the guilt rest primarily on the Nurse (see esp. page 44). In line 511, it is true, the Nurse suggests that the drug is for Phaedra, i.e. to rid her of her passion (cf. οὐτ' ἐπὶ βλάβῃ φρενῶν); but in 513-15 she returns clearly to the traditional love-charm to bewitch the beloved, and Conacher's only solution for these lines is excision, after the example of Kirchhoff and Nauck. While the Nurse in 507ff is, it is true, taking "a new approach" and using deliberate ambiguities, Phaedra has in the meantime given away, by the violent exclamation of 503-6, the pitch of tension, hesitation, and weakness at which she stands. To be sure, she never explicitly, or even consciously, accedes to the Nurse's proposal, but neither does she finally repudiate it. The ambiguity is part of the complexity of her character and the delicate insight and handling of Euripides, which the harshness of textual surgery should not destroy. See also the other interpretations of this passage discussed by Conacher *ibid.*, 38, note 5.

29. These "charms" or "drugs," like Phaedra's surrender of reason and life to Aphrodite's power, are to continue to work destructively upon Hippolytus, for he appears later in Theseus' eyes as a deceitful enchanter (ἀρ' οὐκ ἐπωδὸς [cf. ἐπωδαί, 478] καὶ γόης πέφυκ' ὅδε . . . , 1038). Again, that which would save or "cure" only brings worse ills and deeper involvement in Aphrodite's design. The repetition of the theme of "enchantment," moreover, perhaps suggests the same conquest of reason by passion working in Theseus as in Phaedra.

30. For the theme of repression see Dodds (above, n.1) 102-4.

31. Cf. also what the Nurse says of love in line 348, ἥδιστον, ὦ παῖ, ταῦτόν ἀλγευνόν θ' ἄμα.

32. For the association of springs with the order and traditions of civilization, see *Od.* 17. 205-11. Compare also the association of the Trojan springs with peace and domesticity before the coming of war and the Greeks in *Il.* 22.147-56.

33. See, e.g., *Il.* 11.416, 13.474-75; also Eur. *Phoen.* 1380: κάπροι δ' ὅπως θήγοντες ἀγρίαν γένυν; also Aristoph. *Lys.* 1255-56 and *Frogs* 815 with the scholion *ad loc.* These last three passages indicate that the metaphor is still concrete and vivid in the late fifth century. Cf. also Aeschyl., *Septem* 715.

34. The connection between the two parts of the ode through the adjective *leukopteros* as the epithet of Phaedra's ship and the interconnected themes of the sea and flying are well noted by H. F. Graham, "The 'Escape' Ode in *Hippolytus* 732-75," *CJ* 42 (1947) 275-76.

35. The metaphor of the knot has been noted, in a different connection, by Wesley D. Smith, "Staging in the Central Scene of the *Hippolytus*," *TAPA* 91 (1960) 170.

36. Stephanus, *Thes. Ling. Graec.* defines it as follows: *Ναὺς ὑπέραντλος, Cuius sentina, vel aqua per fatiscentes rimas illabente, vel tumidis fluctibus desuper infusis, tanta copia exundat ut intra limites contineri amplius, neque exauriri possit, atque ideo periculum instet, ne mersa navis intereat.*

37. For the crown-motif and the *theoria* see Herter (above, n.1) 285-86.

38. Murray reads καὶ τόπων Ἀτλαντικῶν, whereas there is equally strong, if not stronger, manuscript authority for θερμόνων τ' Ἀτλαντικῶν (accepted by Méridier) which would make the line practically identical with line 3. Καὶ τόπων is poetically extremely weak, aside from making rather dubious sense. Even with Murray's reading, however, the reference back to line 3, and to 746-47, is unmistakable.

39. For the *nosos*-image see 40, 186, 205, 269, 279, 283, 293, 294, 394, 405, 463, 477, 479, 512, 597, 698, 730, 766 (a total of eighteen instances). It recurs in the second half of the play (aside from 933) only in 1306, significantly of Phaedra's passion, now revealed by Artemis. See also frag. 428 of the *Hipp. Kalyptomenos*. For the image in general see Pohlenz (above, n.1) I 273, with the note, II 114-15.

40. The division of the strophes of this chorus between the Troezenian women and the hunters has been made by Murray, following Verrall's suggestion, on the basis of the alternation of masculine and feminine participles. See Murray's critical note to vv. 1102ff of his Oxford text. His division of the choruses has been generally accepted: see Grube (above, n.1) 190, note 1.

41. The meaning of *doxa atrekês* is ambiguous, as Méridier, (above, n.1) 72, note 4, points out: "*une opinion exacte* (par suite *dépourvue d'illusions*), *sur la réalité*, ou: *des principes de conduite trop rigoureux* (comme ceux d' Hippolyte?)." Wilamowitz had preferred the former view and translated, "Nicht verlangt mich zu tief in das Wesen der Dinge zu blicken," which seems to suit παράσημος better (he continues, "aber auch nicht in das Dunkel des Aberglaubens zu sinken").

42. I am grateful to Prof. John Finley of Harvard University for calling my attention to this passage.

43. Notwood, 93, notes the unusual elaboration of this description of the sea (esp. 1205ff) and suggests that in adjectives like πυριγενῇ Euripides is imitating Sophoclean diction. Euripides, of course, doubtless wished to make his presentation of the sea here, at the high point of the tragedy, as splendid and powerful as possible. Yet in the light of the previous imagery, πυριγενῇ may be more than a mere *epitheton ornans*.

44. For Poseidon Hippios and Demeter see also Pausan. 8.37.9-10. For Poseidon's connection with sexuality, fertility, and vegetation (as *Phytalmios*) see in general the recent study by Bernard Dietrich, "Demeter, Erinys, Artemis," *Hermes* 90 (1962) 129ff, 134-36. Dietrich notes also the connection of the horse, through its association with fountains and water, with vegetation and fertility. The significance of Poseidon for the play is perhaps too hastily dismissed by Grube, 196, who finds the god serving merely as a "piece of mythological apparatus which Euripides thought would add something to the pathos of the drama, and thus made use of, awkwardly and perhaps unfortunately." Poseidon is relevant also, of course, simply as a god of the sea. Note his connection with both horses and the sea in Soph., *Oed. Col.* 709-719.

45. For the connection of the Bull of the Messenger's speech with Pasiphae's bull, see Winnington-Ingram, 175 with note 2 and 196: "Pasiphae's bull is, symbolically speaking, the same bull that came out of the sea to destroy Hippolytus (and the same bull with which Pentheus wrestled in the *Bacchae*)."

46. Aphrodite's connection with Pasiphae's bull is asserted in Hyginus, *Fab.* 40; Poseidon's in Apollodorus, 3.1.3-4. See also J. G. Frazer on the latter passage (Loeb Class. Lib., London 1921) I 305, note 3. Also "Pasiphae" in

Roscher III.2 (1902-1909) 1668. For Euripides' treatment of the legend in the *Cretans*, see D. L. Page, *Select Papyri*, III: *Literary Papyri, Poetry* (Loeb Class. Lib., London 1950) 71ff.

47. Matthaei, 105.

48. Ovid, *Fasti*, 3.265, *Met.* 15.542-44. See also Verg. *Aen.* 7.767, *turbatis distractus equequis*. On the connections made in antiquity between his name and his fate see "Hippolytos" in Roscher I.2 (1886-90) 2683; also Wilamowitz, 95-96; Herter, 275.

49. It is interesting in this connection that Strabo (10.2.19, 458C) gives the roaring as one of the reasons why rivers (esp. the Achelous) were likened to bulls. See also Jebb on Soph. *Trach.* 11.

50. For the 'Troezenian version of Hippolytus' death see Pausan. 2.32.10 and in general Carl Robert, *Die griechische Heldensage* II (= L. Preller, *Griechische Mythologie* II.2) ed. 4 (Berlin 1921) 740 with note 2. The Bull, however, would seem to have been an integral part of the legend in Athens by Euripides' time, and Plutarch (*Thes.* 28) attests that the version of the story in the various tragedians was substantially the same. See also Preller-Robert, 743 with note 3.

51. ὀρθόω is used metaphorically of Phaedra's conflict and moral struggle: see 247, 680. The parallel between Hippolytus' condition here and Phaedra's love-sick state earlier has been noted briefly also by Grube, 193.

52. There is perhaps a further adumbration of the circular movement, the fulfillment of Aphrodite's will, in one of Hippolytus' utterances: ὄλωλα καὶ δὴ νερτέρων ὀρῶ πύλας (1447), which recalls Aphrodite's concluding words in the prologue (56-57):

οὐ γὰρ οἶδ' ἀνεωγμένας πύλας  
ἄιδου, φάος δὲ λοίσθιον βλέπων τόδε.

53. Knox, 31. For the gradual growth of the compassion and reconciliation at the end of the play see also Matthaei, 104ff.

54. The thrice-repeated εἰ κακὸς πέφυκ' ἀνηρ stands also in ironic contrast with Hippolytus' earlier self-righteousness about not being *kakos*, 654.

55. Knox, 29.

56. It is perhaps interesting that previously "pity" was found only in the mythical world into which the chorus longs to escape: *oiktos* is used but one other time in the play, of Phaethon, lamented by his sisters, in the "escape" ode (740).

57. Euripides' emphasis upon Hippolytus' forgiveness of his father and his delicate and beautiful treatment of this theme are interesting in the light of another legend of Hippolytus, that involving his rebirth and transfer to Aricia, in which special emphasis is given to his *refusal* to forgive his father: see Herter, 292 and Pausan. 2.27.4: ὁ δὲ ὡς αἰθρὶς ἐβίω, οὐκ ἡξίου νέμειν τῷ πατρὶ συγγνώμην, ἀλλὰ ὑπεριδὼν τὰς δεήσεις εἰς Ἰταλίαν ἔρχεται, κ.τ.λ.

58. For the position of Phaedra at the end see Matthaei, 110.

59. The positive view of Artemis here has been restated as late as 1935: see S. M. Adams, "Two Plays of Euripides," *CR* 49 (1935) 118-19. He sees Artemis as speaking in 1326-41 "with a gentle statement of the gods' invariable law" and offering Theseus "such comfort as she can" p. 119). Similarly Méridier, 23-24. See *contra* Knox, 29-31; Kitto, 206; Norwood, 96ff. Their views were anticipated, however, as early as Matthaei, 112, who finds, with her usual sensitivity and honesty, "Something . . . of the unsolved in the cruel

relations between gods and men" and "the biting, cruel, truly Euripidean atmosphere of sarcasm against the so-called 'divine.'"

60. Hippolytus' reply to Artemis' request in 1443, καὶ γὰρ πάροιθε σοῖς ἐπειθόμην λόγοις, might also mean in this context that he has already forgiven his father even before Artemis' injunction: "For even before (your request) I was obeying your words (i.e. what you are now enjoining)." Euripides does use *paroi*the of the recent, as well as of the more remote past (see e.g. *Phoen.* 853). The generally received interpretation, however, "For in the past too I was wont to obey your commands," is perhaps more suited to the ironical and bitter tone of Hippolytus here and is probably to be preferred, but the other should be kept in mind. It is not impossible that there is an intentional ambiguity in Hippolytus' words.

61. On Artemis' departure see Kitto, 207: "We breathe a little more freely when this sub-human goddess has taken herself off, leaving the stage to the reconciliation between father and son."

62. For *pitylos* in its literal sense see Aeschyl. *Pers.* 976; Eur. *Tro.* 1123; *I.T.* 1050, 1346, etc. Euripides uses it frequently of lamentation (see *Tro.* 1236), or even of other strong emotions like fear (*H.F.* 816) or madness (*H.F.* 1189, *I.T.* 307). The best and fullest elaboration of the connection between the rhythmic beating of oars and lamentation occurs in Aeschylus (*Sept.* 854-60), for whom the metaphor, as with his sea-metaphors generally, is extremely vivid.

63. For this aspect of the *pitylos*-image, see my essay (above, n.1) 42.

64. Winnington-Ingram, 190: "Of this total reality from which there is no escape the gods are symbols." Norwood, 105, also speaks of Euripides' gods as symbolizing "the permanent facts of the Universe and of human life."

65. See, *inter alios*, Greenwood, 41, 45 (rather one-sided); Wilamowitz, 112-13, who speaks of Euripides' gods as having "des Menschlichen zu viel," while lacking "das Beste des Menschen"; yet he sees the "disharmony" between human nobility and divine baseness as part of his intention and dramatic technique. For the conflict of humanity and the inhuman see Crocker, 245: "It is man *against* the universe—insofar as he wants to be human." See also the references cited above, n. 59.

66. See A. R. Bellinger, "The *Bacchae* and *Hippolytus*," *YCS* 6 (1939) 25f.

67. See *ibid.*, 26: "But compare her [Aphrodite's] unlovely appearance in the prologue with the exquisite song in her honor strangely put just before the entrance of Artemis, her foe." Equally significant, however, is what comes *before* this song. So too Eros, in the same sentence, can be a sacker of cities (541ff) and the "keeper of keys to Aphrodite's dearest chambers" (539-40).

68. For Artemis as a birth-goddess see Plato, *Theaet.* 149 b, and in general, M. P. Nilsson, *Geschichte der griechischen Religion*, ed. 2 (Munich 1955) I 492ff.

69. For Artemis' connection with the sea at Troezen see Wilamowitz, 95; also Jebb on Soph. *Trach.* 636; Apollon. Rhod. 1.571: "Ἀρτεμιν, ἣ κείνας σκοπιάς ἄλως ἀμφιέπεισκειν."

70. See "Saron" in Roscher IV (1909-15) 388. Wilamowitz, 95, note 2, regards Saron as "ein Doppelgänger des Hippolytos nach der einen Seite seines Wesens, der wohl aus ihm differenziert ist."

71. See Knox, 28-29, who notes other parallels. On Phaedra's concealing of "Aphrodite" by "Artemis" see the "Discussion" of Winnington-Ingram's paper, 197; also Dodds, 103-4.



72. For this *topos* of the peaceful private life see in general G. Heintzeler, "Das Bild des Tyrannen bei Platon," *Tüb. Beitr.* 3 (1927) 26ff.

73. See Crocker, 242: "His [Hippolytus'] total rejection of sex in the rejection of enslavement to a disorderly, non-rational, non-moral force, which women, the arousers and objects of our desires, embody. It is a tragic assertion of will — the will to surpass the animal in us, to live on purely human terms of idealism, mind, and spirit." See also Méridier, 24. To see these possibilities in Hippolytus' tragedy is not, of course, to maintain that Euripides intended us to regard him as an "Orphic." See D. W. Lucas, "Hippolytus," *CQ* 40 (1946) 65–69; Winnington-Ingram, 186–87; Knox, 21 with note 22; Méridier, 20, note 1. The religious character of Hippolytus' worship of Artemis is well discussed by Festugière (above, n.17) 14ff with note 19, pp. 145–46. The mystical element which Festugière emphasizes in this worship, however, seems to me only to deepen and embitter his tragedy rather than mitigate it, as Festugière seems to imply in his discussion of the final scene (pp. 16–17). Murray's translation, which is the one which Festugière, unfortunately, quotes, makes Artemis far more tender than she is in the Greek (see discussion above, n.59). Lines like

*Hipp.* . . . The Goddess Artemis is with me here

*Art.* With thee and loving thee, poor sufferer!

*Hipp.* Dost see me, Mistress, nearing my last sleep?

*Art.* Aye, and would weep for thee, if Gods could weep.

(1393ff)

have a sentimentality which take the edge off what Euripides really says; and "He dies; but my love cleaves to him for ever," for line 1398 (οὐ δῆρ' ἀτάρ μοι προσφιλῆς γ' ἀπόλλυσαι), implies far more than what Euripides' Artemis can and does grant. Festugière ends his quotation from the scene with this line, and this suffices for his purposes. But the play goes on, agonizingly, for another seventy verses. Hippolytus' physical sufferings are thus prolonged to the extreme, and he must endure hearing his beloved goddess confess the triumph of her enemy (*Κύπρις* . . . ἡ πανούργος, 1400).

It should be remembered, too, that Hippolytus clearly has no belief in an after-life (I do not, of course, mean to imply such a suggestion on Festugière's part); he sees before him only the grim gates of the nether world (1447). In such a situation Artemis' "No; but you die dear to me" (1398) is cold comfort; and his curse in 1415 and his final address to the goddess in 1441 indicate that he is not in fact comforted. The mystical worshipper of Artemis then ends his life with an expression of humane compassion and heroic endurance (καρτερία: see 1453, 1456). From solitary contemplation of his virgin goddess he arrives at an acceptance of his human ties and obligations; and, at another level, the isolated bastard becomes a true son (1452ff). Here, as in the *Bacchae*, it is very difficult to determine what actually are Euripides' religious attitudes or how favourably he regards the kind of worship which Hippolytus practises.

74. There is perhaps an interesting affinity between Hippolytus' outburst against sex and women with a more famous and more influential idealistic proposal for gaining a measure of freedom for the human spirit: Plato's construction of his ideal state. Compare Hippolytus' suggestions for "buying the seed of children" from temples with a certain weight of gold or bronze or iron each according to his value (620–23) with *Repub.* 3.415aff. and 8.547aff. The

resemblance is, of course, superficial (Plato is using Hesiod, *Op.* 109-201 without any reference to Euripides); and Hippolytus is simply here overemotional and negative rather than serious and constructive; but it is essentially the same universal limitation of human freedom which is in question. Euripides' attitude about the possibility of this freedom is, as the course of the play makes clear, quite different from Plato's.

# ADDENDUM:

W. S. Barrett's exhaustive commentary on the play (Euripides, *Hippolytus*, Oxford 1964) unfortunately appeared too late for me to make use of it. For this paper, however, the following points are especially relevant:

*To Note 14:* On line 17 (p. 157) Barrett is doubtless right in pointing to the sexual implications in the phrase *παρθένῳ ξυνών* and seeing here "a contemptuous stressing of Hipp.'s unnatural asceticism."

*To Note 17:* For an excellent discussion of Phaedra's *aidos*, see p. 230 (on lines 385-86).

*To Note 27:* On p. 23 Barrett follows Stobaeus (rather than Clement of Alexandria) in assigning this fragment to Sophocles' *Phaidra* rather than Euripides' first *Hippolytus*.

*To Note 28:* The subtlety of Euripides' handling of the *pharmaka* and Phaedra's submission to the Nurse is admirably pointed out by Barrett on lines 507-24 (pp. 252-53); see also his comments on lines 509-12, 513-15, 516-21 (pp. 254-56). The complex entanglement of guilt and innocence in Phaedra are stressed at the end of the play too: see 1300-1301 and Barrett *ad loc.* (p. 399). On 1305 (*οὐχ ἐκούσα*) he remarks, "Those who believe that Phaedra consented in the end to the Nurse's scheme are doing so in the face of the poet's own denial: Artemis has no axe to grind for Phaedra, and her judgment here is certainly the poet's own."

*To Note 40:* Barrett (pp. 365-69) is reluctant to accept Verrall and Murray's division of the chorus at 1102ff and inclines to suspect textual corruption. Yet his objection that Hippolytus' companions who appeared at 61-71 "are now away with his horses by the shore (cf. 1173ff)" is not decisive. It would be natural for them to have come at the news of Hippolytus' accusation and then to exit after him. The time-sequence is admittedly awkward, as Barrett points out, though it is highly dubious that the audience would be disturbed by such an inconsistency at this point. Even so, we need not assume that *all* of Hippolytus' companions follow him to the sea at once. Some could linger to commiserate his fate. The chorus of companions would also form a nice balance with Hippolytus' entrance. Their reappearance creates a bitterly ironical link between past innocence and present complexity, happiness and disaster. Through them Hippolytus' way of life seems to pass in review at the very moment when it is about to be destroyed in its totality. Note too the verbal parallels between the two scenes (with 1138-39 cf. 17, 64-65, 73-74).

*To Note 59:* On the coolness of Artemis at the end see p. 409 (on 1396) and p. 414 (on 1437-39).

*To Note 62:* For a full discussion of the meanings of *pitylos*, with abundant parallels, see pp. 418-19.

*To Note 73:* On the religious implications, positive and negative, of Hippolytus' *sophrosyne* see pp. 172-73; and on Hippolytus and Orphism, pp. 342-43.



## BEAUTY AND THE FINE ARTS IN PLATO: SOME *APORIAI*

BY JOSEPH P. MAGUIRE

IN the discussion of beauty as one of the possible differentiae of a work of fine art in *HSCP* 68, we distinguished two relevant types of beauty.<sup>1</sup> According to the first, beauty is that quality of an object in virtue of which it is apprehended to fit harmoniously into a system of objects, by adequately fulfilling its function or achieving its "good." In this conception, we are concerned with the apprehended (or apprehensible) relation between the beautiful object as a whole and another whole of which it is a part, or with which it unites to form a greater whole. It can be described, we noted, as an aspect of the external purposiveness of the object designated "beautiful." In relation to fine art, it depends upon the imitative character of art, and requires, first, "correctness" (*ὁρθότης*), since the proper function of imitative art is to imitate. But, since art also has an attributed, pedagogical function of suggesting Ideas, which is, indeed, its proper function *par excellence*, this kind of beauty requires, further, the faithful imitation of morally worthy, or true, objects; i.e., of objects which are beautiful because *they* fit harmoniously into the system of Ideas.

According to the second conception of beauty in the Dialogues, beauty is that quality of an object in virtue of which its parts are apprehended to fit one another harmoniously so as to form it. In this definition, we are concerned with the apprehended (or apprehensible) relation between one part of the beautiful object and other parts, and between all the parts and the whole; i.e., with the internal organization of the object, or the internal purposiveness of its parts. In relation to fine art, it seems to depend, not from the art-object's being a faithful representation of a worthy or true model, but from its presenting itself to sense, imagination, or intellect as a mode of order or organization. Ostensibly, at least, this kind of beauty can be considered apart from the nature of the object imitated, and even from the fidelity of the imitation.

This conception of two kinds of beauty, however, conceals many difficulties, some general, some especially pertinent to art, which could not be fully met within the compass of the earlier article. It also suggests



certain ramifications of Plato's theory of art which seem worth tracing.

(1) In general, the distinction between the two kinds is not so clear-cut as may appear at first sight. As we have already noted, both can be reduced to functionalism, or suitability, and each involves the other. The first emphasizes the functionalism of the beautiful object as a whole; i.e., its suitability to perform its function, whatever that may be. The second emphasizes the functionalism of its parts; i.e., their mutual suitability to form a whole. But the same object may be a whole of parts and also a part of a larger whole, either in the strict sense, as a constituent of that whole, or as a means to an end, a relationship which Plato seems sometimes to identify with a part-whole relationship. If the same object is both part and whole, it is hard to see how it can be assigned two different beauties, one as part and the other as whole; and harder still to see how it can be considered beautiful as whole and not-beautiful as part, or beautiful as part and not-beautiful as whole.<sup>2</sup> For, anything which is beautiful by being well adapted to perform its proper function is necessarily beautiful also in its internal organization; it has a balance of parts such that each of *them* can perform its function to constitute a stable and efficient whole. For, an object's "virtue" is correlative with its "work" (*ἔργον*, *Rep.* I 353B); and its virtue, correctness, and beauty are relative to its "use" (*χρεία*, *Rep.* X 601D,E, 602A). But the virtue which enables an object to do its work resides in its *τάξις* or *οἰκεῖος κόσμος* (*Gorg.* 506D); i.e., in its "natural" (*κατὰ φύσιν*, *Rep.* 444 D4, 9) stable, hierarchic order of parts, which also constitutes its beauty.<sup>3</sup>

From the other side, it is doubtful that Plato (or, for that matter, many of us) would regard a functional object as beautiful, however pleasing to the eye, if it performed its function poorly. But since, for Plato's teleology, every "serious" object is functional, it is hard to see how the beautiful order of its parts would not imply the beauty of its efficiency.

(2) Neither kind of beauty is peculiar, or even especially pertinent, to art. It is true that the relationship between the two kinds of suitability applies to works of imitative and decorative art (*Rep.* III 401A); but it applies also to artifacts, animal bodies, and plants (*ibid.*); to all products of nature, art, or both (*Rep.* III 381B); to artifacts, bodies, souls, and all animals (*Gorg.* 506D); or, finally, to artifacts, animals, and actions (*Rep.* X 601D). In fact, from Plato's point of view, it seems to apply better to artifacts and natural objects than it does to a work of imitative art, and better still to intelligible objects, as the progression in *Symposium* 210Aff from the beauty of bodies, through that of souls, laws, and systems of knowledge, to the Idea of Beauty, shows clearly.

That is why it is a serious mistake to describe Plato's beauty as "the sensuous counterpart of the good." Counterpart of the good it is, as the apprehended or apprehensible orderliness of the order which Good "binds and holds together" (*Phaedo* 99C 5), or which Mind (the subjective correlate of Good) establishes (*κοσμεῖν*, *Phaedo* 97C 5). But if this is so, strictly speaking it is not "sensuous" even in sensible objects. Still less is it so in intelligible objects, where, in fact, it tends to merge with their intelligibility, since we can know a thing only teleologically;<sup>4</sup> i.e., only in the light of its place or rôle in a system of means-end, or part-whole; and it seems to be just such systematic interrelationships, contemplated for their own sake, that constitute beauty.

But even if we regard beauty as the *sensuous* counterpart of the good, the difficulty still remains that it seems less pertinent to works of art than to artifacts or natural organisms. The terms "functionalism," "suitability," "organization," seem devised to describe the relationship among the parts of an organism and between the organism and its environment;<sup>5</sup> whereas, as we saw, it is something of a problem to determine whether Plato ascribes a function at all to imitative art. Hence, if beauty is to be reduced to functionalism, it may well seem that the beautiful object *par excellence* is not a work of fine art, but either an organism or an artifact.

(3) The first difficulty above turned on the tendency of the two kinds of beauty to merge. This tendency was seen to be present wherever the two kinds of beauty are found — in natural objects or artifacts, as well as in works of art. But there is also another way in which the distinction between the two kinds becomes blurred, and this pertains uniquely to works of art. The point of the distinction between the two, in the case of a work of art, is that one kind of beauty (that of external purposiveness) belongs to it insofar as it is an imitation of a model, and the other kind (that of internal purposiveness), insofar as it has certain formal properties of its own. But it would appear that the formal character of a work of art is simply a function of its imitative character. For, if the work of art achieves a beauty of external purposiveness by efficiently performing its function of imitating or re-presenting a model, its internal order of parts duplicates the order of the sensible or intelligible parts of its model. Hence, its beauty of internal purposiveness, if it exists, is not autonomous, but must be referred to the beauty of its model. This, indeed, seems to be the point of the passages used elsewhere<sup>6</sup> to establish levels of art in Plato's discourse: *Soph.* 235D; *Laws* II 667D–668E. The *Sophist* divides "imitation" into two chief classes: "eikastic," which

produces copies (εἰκόνας) by preserving the true proportions (συμμετρίαι) of the model, and by assigning its "due" color to each part (235D-E); and "phantastic," which produces "phantasms" and εἴδωλα by constructing, not the true proportions (235E 7, 236A 5), but those which merely appear beautiful, by being seen from an "unbeautiful" vintage (236B 4). And the *Laws* defines "imitative correctness" as a duplication, in the copy, of the "numbers" of the model; the number, and relative position, of its parts; and their "appropriate" colors and shapes (668E; cf. also *Crat.* 431C, 434A-B). The upshot is that these passages, whether taken literally in reference to the plastic arts, or metaphorically in reference to all arts, seem to specify the similarity between copy and model as *une ressemblance analogique*, wherein the "true proportionality" among the parts of the copy is not abstract, or ideal, but simply the proportionality which obtains among the parts of the model.<sup>7</sup> Taken literally, this proportionality is presumably mathematical; taken metaphorically, it refers to the "natural" relationship of dominance and subordination among the "parts," elements, or faculties of the model, as determined by the model's Idea.<sup>8</sup> In either case, the passages from the *Sophist* and the *Laws* seem implicitly to deny any autonomy to the formal beauty of a work of art, reducing it to one concrete aspect of imitative beauty. Or, rather — and this makes matters still worse — they reduce it to one concrete aspect of imitative correctness, which the *Laws* explicitly distinguishes from beauty.

(4) The last sentence leads in to what is perhaps the chief difficulty in the way of drawing an aesthetic, however implicit, from the Dialogues. The difficulty is that the beauty of the model which, in virtue of its imitative correctness, the copy represents, seems to be, not an aesthetic value at all, but a moral one. For, the beauty of a work of art (as distinct from its pleasurable and correctness) consists in its usefulness or good which, in turn, depends on the moral worth of the object it represents.<sup>9</sup>

How does the insistence upon moral worth as the only beauty of a work of art relate to the conception of the beauty of internal purposiveness as formal beauty?

(5) Truth is also posited as a value of imitative art, specifically with respect to "inspired" poetry, although in *Laws* II 668A it is described as the supreme value of "all imitation."<sup>10</sup> If truth means correspondence between subject and object, and this, in the case of imitative art, means correspondence between copy and model, the copy's truth seems identical with its correctness, just as its beauty did in *Aporia* 3. If, on the other hand, truth relates to the model, as well as to the correspondence between copy and model, what is the relationship between this

truth and moral utility, and between this truth and beauty?<sup>11</sup> In the instance of a rhetorical discourse, for example, as we shall see from our analysis of *Phaedrus*, truth is a quality of the model which the rhetor tries to reproduce, and it is the model's truth which determines the organic unity of the discourse. Truth thus performs the same function as the beauty of external purposiveness which, according to *Aporiai* 1 and 3, determines the beauty of internal purposiveness; for, the organic unity of a discourse is just the beauty of its internal purposiveness. Is truth, then, identical with beauty, according to the principle of *Republic* V 477D: that capacities which relate to the same thing and achieve the same effect are the same?

(6) Note 10 discussed a possible distinction by Plato between literary and non-literary art. With respect to degrees of efficacy in representing truth, however, a more interesting distinction is that between naturalistic art, whether literary or non-literary, and abstract art. This distinction emerges from one within the plastic arts. Among those which, according to *Rep.* III 401A ff, can produce "images of good character" (A 8, B 2), or "images of virtue" (402C 6), and so represent "the nature of the beautiful and comely" (401C 5), are both painting and sculpture (401A 1, B 5), on the one hand, and architecture and decoration,<sup>12</sup> on the other. The former, presumably, represent virtues by a naturalistic representation of "men's characters and actions" which possess these virtues, through bodily attitudes, gestures, facial expressions, and "literary" situation, or "narrative."<sup>13</sup> The latter presumably do so abstractly, by their form alone. This distinction could be generalized to include literature, especially poetry, and pantomimic dancing, among naturalistic arts; and "pure" music, and perhaps abstract dancing, among abstract. The *aporia*, then, would concern the relative efficacy of two kinds of imitative art: one which directly imitates Ideas, especially Ideas of virtues (*Rep.* III 402C 2, (?) εἶδη), by form alone; and one which imitates Ideas at second remove, and by both form and subject-matter — directly imitating men who imitate the Ideas.<sup>14</sup>

(7) There is another difficulty, perhaps connected with abstract art, which is the converse of *Aporiai* 4 and 5. Where they seemed to reduce the formal beauty of art to moral utility or truth, this seems to posit a "formal" beauty even without form. In the well-known passage of *Philebus* 51C–D, Plato speaks of pure tones, colors, lines, and simple plane and solid figures as "καθ' αὐτά beautiful." By this (which is commonly, but dangerously, translated as "absolutely beautiful," and, with the αἰεί of 51C 7, as "eternally and absolutely beautiful"), he



apparently means "beautiful with a beauty which is not dependent upon any mode of relationship between them and anything else."<sup>15</sup>

But, if so, what kind of beauty are they to be thought to possess? Not — by definition — that of external purposiveness. But, apparently, not that of internal purposiveness, either — at least in the case of the pure tones and colors and isolated lines (as distinct from the figures). For, beauty of internal purposiveness depends on relations among parts, and they have no parts. To regard them *as if* they were composite, by grounding their beauty in unity,<sup>16</sup> seems an evasion. Unity as a character of a concrete sensible implies diversity of parts,<sup>17</sup> and there are no parts in a single pure tone or color, or in an isolated line. To adduce *Timaeus* 80A–B, and conceive of the single pure tones (and, presumably, the pure colors and the lines) in *Philebus* as composite of *successive* and diverse parts,<sup>18</sup> seems to compound the evasion.

(8) Theoretically, the plane and solid figures of the *Philebus* passage are in a slightly different position. Since they are composite, they *can* possess the beauty of internal purposiveness. Perhaps, indeed, they can possess even the beauty of external purposiveness, although their beauty, too, is defined as not dependent on any relationship with anything else. It may be, however, that, in calling them unrelated, Plato is contrasting them primarily with natural objects ( $\zeta\hat{\omega}\alpha$ ) and artifacts, which are related to specific and preordained functions, and with naturalistic works of imitative art ( $\zeta\omega\gamma\rho\alpha\phi\acute{\eta}\mu\alpha\tau\alpha$ ), which are related to particular models. In that case, it is conceivable that he would regard as unrelated an abstract work which did, in fact, "imitate" — provided that what it imitated was the generic orderliness of the world of Ideas, and it imitated that only by the symmetry, proportionality, and so on, of its form.<sup>19</sup> Thus, these " $\kappa\alpha\theta'$   $\alpha\upsilon\tau\acute{\alpha}$  beautiful" objects would achieve a beauty of external purposiveness simply by achieving a beauty of internal purposiveness; and would, in fact, be instances of the abstract art considered in *Aporia* 6.<sup>20</sup>

This, however, is a theoretical distinction only, between the composite and the simple objects of this passage. Actually, the passage itself does not distinguish them. Both kinds are linked in the same way to pure pleasure, and both are beautiful in the same way —  $\kappa\alpha\theta'$   $\alpha\upsilon\tau\acute{\alpha}$ . This seems to exclude any external purposiveness for either, and, certainly, any difference between them with respect to any disguised functions either may be thought to have. We can, therefore, consider *Aporiai* 7 and 8 as one, and begin our general discussion of the *Aporiai* with it.

## DISCUSSION

*Aporiai* 7 and 8

In view of the imposing aesthetic conclusions which have been drawn from *Philebus* 51Bff, the first, and perhaps the most important, thing to be noted is that the passage is not concerned with beauty at all, but with classifying pleasures according to their "purity"; i.e., according as they are, or are not, preceded, accompanied, and followed by pains. Plato is urging that the pleasures which accompany the perception of these lines, colors, tones, and figures (and, be it remembered, the perception of odors and the acquisition of knowledge) *are* pure, because the lines, etc. have no referents, as works of imitative art have,<sup>21</sup> to involve the emotions or the judgment of the observer. For his argument, the important thing about them is, not that they are beautiful, but that they produce pleasure, and that the pleasure is "pure." He is aware that he is applying the term, "beautiful," in a special way (51B 3, λεγόμενα). It is not that of "the many," to characterize works of art (51C 2ff); but it is not necessarily his own either.<sup>22</sup>

He none the less uses it, chiefly because "beauty" was probably familiar in current definition as the correlative of "pleasant to eye and/or ear,"<sup>23</sup> and such a correlative is all he needs here. He is approaching his real subject, "pure" pleasure, from the side of the objects that produce it. Among these are certain objects which produce visual or auditory pleasure. Being Plato, he would like to class these visible and audible objects together in virtue of their common character of producing pleasure. "Beauty" is at hand from the current definition as the term to designate this common character. Given that, he establishes the necessary correlation between his objects and *pure* pleasure (i.e., pleasure which is immediate, unalloyed with pain, and, presumably, universal, since, unlike the pleasure associated with the perception of representational art, it does not depend on the character or training of the percipient), simply by qualifying them as "καθ' αὐτά beautiful."

"καθ' αὐτά beautiful" means "beautiful in virtue of themselves"; as noted above, it is contrasted with "beautiful in relation to something else." Thus, "in virtue of themselves" seems to imply chiefly the two notes of self-reference and self-sufficiency: the beautiful object is not beautiful *qua* means, instrument, part, or representation of anything else; nor does it need anything else as a foil,<sup>24</sup> or embellishment,<sup>25</sup> for its beauty. If this is all that is included in the expression, "in virtue of themselves" simply distinguishes their beauty, whatever its nature,

condition, or cause, from another kind of beauty which is conditioned by the beautiful object's relations with something else. In that case, we learn nothing from this passage about Plato's conception of beauty.

We learn something about that conception only if "in virtue of themselves" implies self-identity, as well as self-reference and self-sufficiency; or if the statement, "pure pleasure is that which is produced by (among other things) objects beautiful in themselves," can be converted to: "absolute beauty is that which produces pure pleasure" (and so, presumably, "beauty is that which produces pleasure"). In the first case, we would be given a ground for the beauty of these objects in their self-identity; and in the second, a definition of beauty in terms of pleasure.

With respect to the latter, it is quite impossible that Plato would accept any definition of beauty which made it identical with, or dependent upon, any kind of pleasure. *Gorgias* and *Hippias Maior* may seem to suggest otherwise,<sup>26</sup> but, in the long run, the fact remains: an object may be pleasant because it is beautiful, but it is not beautiful because it is pleasant, just as, according to *Euthyphro* 9E-11A, an object may be loved by the gods because it is holy, but it is not holy because it is loved by the gods. An object is beautiful or holy because it participates in Beauty<sup>27</sup> or Holiness; and these, despite the relativists (*Theat.* 172B), have an *οὐσία* of their own.

Our passage is scarcely more helpful for the other doctrine mentioned. The notion that self-identity is part of the meaning of "in virtue of themselves" may seem plausible if we compare the pure tones, which are instances of things *καθ' αὐτά* beautiful, in 51D 6, with the white color of 53B 1, which is most beautiful, apparently because it is purest and truest; i.e., most self-identical, with the least admixture of non-white. But if that were the meaning of the present passage, *καθ' αὐτά* would have to mean, not "in virtue of themselves," but "in virtue of being just themselves"; not "unrelated," but "unalloyed"; and this, even if it were linguistically possible, forms no contrast with "relative to something else" (*πρός τι*). In fact, the doctrine that the beauty of an object is a function of its self-identity is important for Plato, but it cannot be derived from this passage. It will be considered on its merits in the discussion of *Aporia* 5, on the interrelationship of truth and beauty.

#### *Aporia* 6

Though the geometrical figures of *Philebus* tell us nothing of his conception of beauty, or art, Plato apparently does believe that there is

an abstract art which can imitate directly — by its form — Ideas; and especially the Ideas of (some) virtues. Not only the architecture and decoration of *Republic* III 401Aff, but also the metres of poetry, the rhythms of dance, and the rhythms, modes, and melodies of music, seem able to do this. These last, Plato regularly considers as integral parts of song-dance (*Laws* II 669B–D), and as determined by the words.<sup>28</sup> But his remark (*Laws* II 669E) that it is hard to recognize worthy (ἀξιόλογοι) models when they are represented by rhythm and harmony alone, implies that “worthy” models can be so imitated.<sup>29</sup>

Presumably, his analysis of the plastic arts was similar. The plastic analogues of song-dance seem to be naturalistic sculpture and painting; and the elements in them analogous to the words of song-dance, on the one hand, and to its rhythms and harmonies, on the other, seem to be their “literary” content and their design (“colors and shapes,” *Rep.* X 601A), respectively. Within good sculpture and painting, it is again to be presumed, “content” and “form” are integrated, the “form” following the “content”; but the two are separable, as the “content” and “form” of song-dance are (*Rep.* X 601B, *Gorg.* 502C); and design can, by itself, imitate “worthy” models, however less clearly. According to this analysis, design by itself would be manifested in architecture and decoration, as the formal elements of song-dance by themselves are manifested in instrumental music and, perhaps, “abstract” dance.

The “worthy” models imitable by abstract art are not the “characters and actions” of men, but the formal aspect of the states which constitute good character and action: goodness, or virtue in general; and, especially, justice and temperance. These are imitable by form alone, because they are themselves conceived as forms of order. They are so conceived, apparently, for two chief reasons: because the Good manifests itself as right measure and proportionality (*Phil.* 64E); and because virtue<sup>30</sup> (or, sometimes, wisdom<sup>31</sup>), or justice,<sup>32</sup> or temperance,<sup>33</sup> or both justice and temperance,<sup>34</sup> are the qualities whereby the soul achieves wholeness, and ceases to be an aggregate of clashing impulses. In the light of the tripartite psychology implied there (cf. *Gorg.* 493B, 496E), it is more than metaphor when *Gorgias* 503D–504E describes justice and temperance as simply particular instances, in the soul, of the organization (τάξις καὶ νόμος) which subsists in every good product of art (or, indeed, of nature or craft, *Gorg.* 506D–E). But virtue so conceived can be represented by any work, in any medium, which prefigures to sense, intellect, or imagination, the unification of diverse parts through symmetry, proportionality, and so forth. Such a work is inexpressive, perhaps, compared with a naturalistic one, because it presents



only the generic features of wholeness, in abstraction from the nature of the parts unified. But it certainly presents truth.

### *Aporia 5*

With respect to truth, Plato holds both a correspondence and a coherence theory, although, no doubt,<sup>35</sup> the latter can be reduced to the former. The first kind of truth is primarily the correspondence of a thinking subject with an object; the second, and more important, is a mode of the object's being. The latter, "objective," truth can be described, in terms of correspondence, as the correspondence of the object with its Idea, nature, form, or type; or it can be described, in terms of coherence, as the absence of internal contradiction or of alien admixture. This is what Plato calls an object's "purity" (*Phil.* 53A). It can also be called its "self-identity," or, in a sense, its "unity." But — and this is where Bosanquet's theory about the pure tones, colors, etc., of *Philebus* seems misleading — we should distinguish between the manifestations of this "unity" in a simple and in a composite object, like the good life (*Phil.* 64B,E). In a simple object, its "unity" is its "purity" or self-identity; it is "one," because there is nothing but it. In a composite object, the "unity" which is "purity" is signified, and conditioned, by another, structural, unity — that of a whole of diverse parts.<sup>36</sup> The two kinds of unity in a composite, however, seem to imply each other. If there is the unity of self-identity, there is also the structural unity; but it is apparently further assumed that if there is the structural unity, there is also the unity of self-identity. This means that wholeness, by itself, seems to guarantee the truth of a composite; or that the truth of internal coherence guarantees the (objective) truth of correspondence. The assumption is, presumably, that if a whole of diverse parts can maintain its stability in the face of the potentially divisive tendencies of its parts, it is thereby shown to be natural and true.<sup>37</sup>

Both these kinds of truth have their analogues in art. Analogous to the correspondence between mind and object is that between copy and model; analogous to the truth of the object is that of the model, which, again, can be viewed as correspondence with its Idea or type, or as internal coherence; and the latter, in turn, can be identified with the unity of a whole of parts, as well as with the unity of self-identity, since an art-object is always composite, and in a composite one unity implies the other.

Analogous in art, too, is the relative importance of the two kinds of truth: there, too, the more important is the "objective." Hence, truth in art implies, not only a correct copy of (any) model, but also a correct copy of a "true"<sup>38</sup> model, where "truth" can appear as the wholeness of a whole of harmonious parts. This distinction will finally answer the difficulty about the apparent identity of truth and correctness. They are not the same: "correctness" is Plato's word for the correspondence between a copy and its model when he wishes to deny, or not to assert, the objective truth of the model.

Yet, even if this general distinction between the truth and the correctness of a copy is acknowledged, there may still seem to be a special difficulty in the case of a correct copy of a formally pleasing model. Some such copies Plato would certainly refuse to characterize either as true or as beautiful, though they might seem to be beautiful with both kinds of beauty — that of internal, as well as that of external, purposiveness; and true with both kinds of truth — not only that of correspondence between copy and model, but also that of internal coherence in the model. And, indeed, if the "formally pleasing" object is "abstract," it may, as we saw, be both true and beautiful — as a "copy" of the generic features of Ideal order.<sup>39</sup> But if the "formally pleasing" object is representational, and its attractiveness depends on divorcing form from a perhaps "false" representative content and regarding form as simply the integration of lines, colors, shapes, masses, or sounds according to some principle of symmetry or proportionality, Plato would be quite consistent in refusing to call it true or beautiful. It is not true, because the model, by hypothesis, is not true; not beautiful, because form cannot be thus divorced from content. The "parts" of a representational work of art are substantive, as well as formal, elements; ideational as well as sensuous; and if beauty is internal coherence, the coherence must be complete — sensuous must cohere with sensuous, ideational with ideational, and sensuous with ideational.<sup>40</sup> Self-contradiction in any of the three areas will preclude beauty.

The final difficulty is that of distinguishing objective truth and the beauty of internal purposiveness: both depend on the absence of self-contradiction, or, positively expressed, on the harmony of parts. No doubt, the harmony of ideational parts is especially prominent in truth: it is pre-eminently truth that is violated when, for example, a virtuous man is depicted, whether in a verbal, plastic, or musical medium, as dominated by passion or desire. And perhaps the harmony of sensuous parts is more obviously relevant to beauty. But the harmony of either kind of parts is both true and beautiful, and beautiful because true.<sup>41</sup>

Beauty, in fact, is truth — or, better, perhaps, is the harmony of parts which constitutes truth — regarded as an object of contemplation.

#### *Aporia 4*

Beauty is truth, perhaps, and truth, beauty. But what of the relationship between truth-beauty and moral utility? Is Plato's aesthetic a moralistic one, in the sense that it reduces all criteria of art, including beauty, to the criterion of moral utility?

The answer to this question has already been suggested. No doubt Plato's attitudes toward art are often moralistic enough. As a pedagogue, he regularly approves or condemns art on the basis of its moral effects; and he would surely feel that no art which produces bad moral effects is good art. But the goodness, as well as the beauty, of art is a function of its model's truth, as defined in the last *Aporia*, not of its moral effects. The theory approaches the moralistic because the imitative art Plato has primarily in mind imitates the characters and actions of men, and these do have such direct and immediate moral effects that, in any practical evaluation, the moral effects outweigh, or seem to outweigh, the criteria of truth or beauty. The fact remains, however, that even here the moral utility derives from the ἀρετή of the characters, in the morally neutral sense of "excellence in their kind"; i.e., their truth. It is because they correctly depict the Idea, Man, that they are morally beneficial and beautiful, at the same time.

Needless to say, this does not entirely dispose of the problem. It may seem hard to deny that truth, in some sense, is relevant to the aesthetic judgment (although, of course, it has often been denied). But it is hard to deny also that Plato's conception of artistic truth would seem narrow to a modern aesthetician, even to one who admitted the relevance of truth in general as a criterion. Such a modern would probably feel justified in insisting that the artist be faithful to what he sees, whatever that is; that his vision be internally consistent; that it and the vehicle of its expression cohere; and that the different aspects of the vehicle of expression cohere with one another. He might feel justified also in insisting that the artist's initial vision correspond with reality. But by this he would mean at most that it should be a clear and distinct evaluation of an objective situation; that it should be verifiable in the sense that competent observers can be brought to see it, too; that it should employ all the observations and experiences relevant to the point of view adopted by the artist; and that the evaluation should cohere with other, non-artistic, cognitive approaches to the real. This, indeed, is

much; and it is more still if, as an inference, especially from the last point, our modern should conclude that the more profound the artist is, the more profoundly moral will his vision be.<sup>42</sup>

Nevertheless, this theory would still be far from Plato's theory of artistic truth. The criteria of truth are generically the same in both theories; viz., internal coherence and correspondence with reality. So is the relationship between truth and the moral. The difference between them lies in the content of their "reality" and in the criteria of their "correspondence." For our modern, "reality" is pluralistic, and truth — and the moral — therefore, have many faces, varying with the frames of reference initially adopted by different artists. Moreover, the criterion of "correspondence" is for him, ultimately, coherence; i.e., the coherence of the particular insight being judged with other insights, artistic and non-artistic. It may be urged that, in practice, Plato's criterion of correspondence is no different.<sup>43</sup> But, even if this is, in fact, so, it is not the way Plato himself conceives the situation. As he sees it, the Idea is intuited, and the intuition carries its own verification. The subsequent deduction leads to sure knowledge of everything included under the Idea, not to verification of the Idea itself.

In any case, the "reality" with which the artist's insight, if it is to be true, must correspond, is, for Plato, uniquely the Idea, which stringently limits the kind of art to which the predicate "true" can be applied. The relevant Idea for the artist, who imitates the characters and actions of men, is the Idea of Man, or the Ideas of the virtues which qualify Man. The truth of his creation, therefore, is directly proportional to the fidelity with which he represents that Idea or those Ideas. By this criterion, however, most actual art is neither true nor moral, in itself or in its effects, and it can be condemned on any of these three counts indifferently.

### *Aporia 3*

The problem as stated concerns the dependence of an art-object's beauty of internal purposiveness upon its beauty of external purposiveness. The point is that the art-object's internal beauty, if it exists, is simply a duplication of the internal beauty of the model; and such duplication is a function of imitative correctness, which, if the model is true and beautiful, merges with the copy's beauty of external purposiveness (*Aporia 5*).

In this form, the *Aporia* perhaps no longer needs discussion. The fifth *Aporia* discussed the same problem from the viewpoint of truth, and, in so doing, showed a precise parallelism between truth and beauty in general, between the truth of coherence and the beauty of internal



purposiveness, and between the truth of correspondence and the beauty of external purposiveness. Hence, the conclusion reached there presumably applies here, too. The focal point for both truth and beauty is, in fact, the model, not the copy,<sup>44</sup> and if, in the case of beauty, we choose to state this by speaking of the subordination of the copy's beauty of internal purposiveness to its beauty of external purposiveness, Plato presumably would be willing to accept that consequence.

If the answer is the same to both *Aporiai*, however, it does seem easier to accept in the case of truth than in that of beauty. When we analyze the *truth* of an object of representational art, we focus on its correspondence with its model, and on the ideational coherence of the model (or on the model's correspondence with its Idea). When we analyze the *beauty* of an art-object, however, we tend to focus on its own surface coherence. Having done that, we find it easy to identify this surface coherence with beauty, and, further, to regard it as a self-sufficient mode of organization independent of what is organized. Simultaneously, we may identify what is organized with truth, and regard that as equally autonomous. We thus set up the dichotomy of form and content which has so plagued the history of aesthetics, correlating form with beauty, and content with truth.

Plato goes to great lengths to avoid this dichotomy; chiefly, by showing (in *Phaedrus*) how the organization of a literary art-work is a function of what is organized.<sup>45</sup> It is true that the analysis in *Phaedrus* is of the way in which truth determines organization, not of the way in which the beauty of external purposiveness determines the beauty of internal purposiveness. But if the parallelism between truth and beauty established above is correct, this difference is not important. In any case, the *Phaedrus* shows clearly that form is not a pre-existent mode of organization which can be imposed indifferently upon any content, itself pre-existent; nor even a mode of organization oriented around an internal focus, within the specific subject-matter being organized; but only an organization of *this* content, determined by *this* content and itself partly determining the content, both being ultimately determined by an external standard.

That is to say, the *Phaedrus* seems to distinguish three levels of artistic discourse, and the distinction turns in part precisely upon the degree to which each level realizes wholeness. At the lowest level, the discourse is simply a juxtaposition of the disparate parts of a speech (proem, narration, etc.) as detailed in the hand-books (266D–267D); which are, actually, not parts, but only prerequisite materials (269B 7, 268E 5, 269A 1). There is no attempt to “fit” (πρέπουσαν) them to each other

and, especially, to the whole (264C 5, 268D 5, 269C 3). Indeed, there is no conception of a whole to which to fit them, or of any principle of organization. The upshot is that there is no *necessity* in the order of topics: the discourse is "headless" and "footless," without beginning, middle, or end (264C).

What seems to be a second level of discourse does have a focal point of organization: an internal one. It is the initial definition of the subject of discourse, in relation to which, says Socrates anticipating the phraseology of *Laws* XII 965B, the rhetor organizes all the subsequent discourse (263E 1). The result, formally considered, *is* organically (*ὡσπερ ζῶον*) unified, and *does* have "middles and extremes fitted to each other and to the whole" (264C). But it seems possible to have such wholeness as this without reference to any external standard of organization (the model, form, or good)<sup>46</sup>. If so, the difficulty arises that such an external standard, according to *Gorgias* and *Laws* X,<sup>47</sup> and, indeed, according to *Phaedrus* (260E, 270B), is prerequisite for art, and is included in the notion of wholeness. That is, wholeness in those passages seems to imply an external standard of organization.

The third level of discourse, therefore, does employ an external standard; in fact, three standards which Plato, by a feat of legerdemain, manages to fuse into one. By first considering rhetoric from the viewpoint of its function; viz., to persuade,<sup>48</sup> he concludes that a discourse must be ordered in the light of the type of soul to be persuaded (270Bff) and of the "psychological moment" (*καίρος*, 272A 4), for maximum persuasiveness in a given case. Unless the speech is so ordered, he insists, the rhetoric which produces it is no art, but only a knack or routine (270B). But here, again, there is a difficulty. On the face of it, such a speech might well be an instance of what *Gorgias* 462Bff calls a sycophantic knack, and opposes to art on the ground that it aims only at pleasing, not benefiting, the audience.<sup>49</sup> Plato, however, obviates this interpretation by forcing "the art of persuasion" (which is a current definition of rhetoric<sup>50</sup>) to mean "persuasion of the truth" (260E) and to "virtue," by means of "lawful" arguments and practices (270B, cf. *Polit.* 304A 1). Thus, he introduces two new external standards of organization for artistic discourse, in addition to the type of soul to be persuaded: the "good" of that soul; and "truth," since only when truth is attained is there a genuine art of speaking, and not an inartistic knack (260E). The "good," perhaps, in the light of *Gorgias* 462Bff, is already connoted by the "art of speaking"; but "truth" is new — and ambiguous. It refers, primarily, to knowledge of the subject of discourse (259E, 263B, 265B–266A, 272D, 273D–E, 277B–C), which is

required even if the intent of the rhetor is to mislead (259E-260A, 262A-C, 273D). But it is also used to refer, first to knowledge of the different types of soul; and secondly, to knowledge of the type of argument which is likely to persuade each type of soul (271A-272B).

There is probably more than one justification for the ambiguity of "truth" or "knowledge" here. The chief one, perhaps, is the rôle of logical Division. It is upon Division that depend all three kinds of knowledge: of the definition of the subject of discourse (263B, 265B-266A, 277E, 273D-E); of the classification of soul-types (271A-272B, 273D-E, 277B-C); and of the classification of suitable types of argument (271D-272B, 277C). Upon it, indeed, depends all ability to speak or think (266B). It is indistinguishable from Dialectic (266C), and operates by cleaving reality at its natural joints (265E). Thereby, it attains truth<sup>51</sup> in whatever sphere employed. In a sense, therefore, it is the "one" of which the different kinds of required knowledge are the "many" instances; and instances are interchangeable.

The external standards of organization for the third level of artistic discourse, then, can be reduced to one: truth, or that which is achieved by Division. And, since the primary use of Division is to define the subject of discourse, the primary standard is knowledge of "how the truth lies" (278C 4) there. If one "constructs" (*συντιθέναι*) discourses in the light of that, he is a philosopher; if he has no standard of construction other than the parts of his composition which he turns over and over tortuously, gluing them to one another and tearing them apart, he is a poet, or logograph, or nomograph (278C-E).<sup>52</sup>

If we may adduce again the fifth *Aporia*, it seems possible to equate "truth" here with the model's, and the organization of the discourse with the copy's, beauty of internal purposiveness. In that case, the dependence of the copy's beauty on the model's is surprising only if the copy's is conceived as surface organization, independent of the ideational coherence of the model. If, on the other hand, the same organization is found already in the very structure of the model, as the condition, indeed, of its ideational coherence, the separation of "form" and "content" in the copy and the independence of this "form" from the internal coherence of the model, or from the beauty of external purposiveness in the copy, are, all alike, inconceivable.

#### *Aporiai* 1 and 2

The first two *Aporiai* were concerned with beauty in general, not simply with the beauty of fine art. The first stressed the apparently

necessary interdependence of the beauty of internal, and that of external, purposiveness, in any beautiful object. The second suggested that the beautiful object *par excellence* is not a work of art, but an intelligible system; and, in the sphere of the sensible, either a natural object or an artifact.

In the light of all the discussions which have preceded, the statements of both *Aporiai* must be accepted, the first, *in toto*, the second, in part. The statement of the first *Aporia* itself demonstrated the interdependence, from Plato's viewpoint, of the two kinds of beauty in natural objects and artifacts. The same interdependence for the work of art has been asserted in the discussions of *Aporiai* 3 and 5: to be beautiful, the work of art must be a correct copy of a true model; the model, if it is true, is beautiful; the copy, if it is correct, reproduces the internal beauty of the model; and, in the act of so doing, it achieves its own beauty of external purposiveness.

The statement of the second *Aporia* is partially valid. Beauty, whether in natural object, artifact, work of art, or intelligible system, is a function of discernible relations, first, between the objects and their ends or goods, and then, between the parts of the objects. But the proper end of a work of art — to "point to" its model — seems to Plato to lack "seriousness" when compared with the ends of a natural product of the Divine Maker (*Soph.* 265Bff), or an artifact, or a moral code (*Rep.* X 599D), or a system of knowledge. The successful achievement of this end, indeed, does not even result in beauty, but only in "correctness," unless the model it "points to" is itself beautiful. The work of art becomes "serious" when its proper end *par excellence*<sup>53</sup> comes into play. It then re-presents truth for moral effect. But, even then, it does not understand the truth it re-presents, or the moral effects it is capable of achieving. In reaching this end, it has to be manipulated from outside, by the philosopher-statesman. The beauty it possesses, therefore, is necessarily dependent — not only upon the beauty of its model, but also upon the philosopher, to set up a true, or beautiful, model. Compared with the beauty of a natural object, which is independent of man's contriving; or with that of an artifact, which is constructed by the artisan in the light of a single, and useful, end; or with that of a system of knowledge, which is itself "heuristic" of truth, the beauty of a work of art is, indeed, secondary and derivative.

We are, in fact, faced with a dilemma. On the one hand, the beauty of a work of art is the most conspicuous instance of internal beauty there is, if we can concentrate on its surface arrangement, either because the work refers to nothing outside itself, or because we can prescind from any



reference it may have. In either of these cases, its surface arrangement would be, practically speaking, the end of the work; and only here (as opposed to a natural object, artifact, moral code, etc.) would "form" be aimed at for its own sake. On the other hand, such art, if such there be, is in itself trivial — a form of *παιδιά*. "Serious" art is essentially representational, and we cannot prescind from its reference.<sup>54</sup> Its beauty, therefore, cannot be divorced from the beauty of the model it represents, nor its own "form" from its "content." This, by itself, would not destroy the claim for the superiority of the beauty of art over that of a natural object, artifact, etc.; but the fact that, *qua* art, it is incapable of achieving such beauty — that it has to be shown what model is beautiful — does destroy it.

## NOTES

1. See "The Differentiation of Art in Plato's Aesthetics", *HSCP* 68 (1964) 400-2.

2. For a general statement of the difficulty, cf. *Phaedo* 92E-93A. Plotinus agrees: *Enn.* I 6, 1; 1s. 25-30 H-S.

3. *κάλλος*, *Rep* IV 444E 1; cf. also *Phil.* 64E, where virtue and beauty are said to be everywhere products of right measure and proportionality among the parts.

4. The Good is the cause of knowledge: *Rep.* VI 508D-509A.

5. Cf. Arist. *de part. an.* 645a 21-26.

6. "Differentiation," p. 393.

7. So, P. Grenet, *Les Origines de l'Analogie philosophique dans les Dialogues de Platon* (1948) 190, n.689.

8. Cf. "Differentiation," p. 394.

9. *Laws* II 654Bff, 655B-C, 669A-B.

10. "All imitation" may, however, be confined by the context to music. If so, since ideally the other elements in music follow the words, it may still be that Plato would distinguish between literary art, to which truth is relevant, and nonliterary, to which it is not. In favor of this distinction is the fact that both truth and, especially, inspiration, are explicitly ascribed by Plato only to literary art; and that, indeed, in *Crat.* 430D the term "truth" is reserved for a linguistic situation. Against it, however, is the consideration that truth is equally applicable to the plastic arts, whether truth is a correspondence between (any) model and copy, and is therefore equivalent to correctness (*Soph.* 235D-E, *Rep.* II 377E); or it is a correspondence between a morally useful model and its copy; or it is a quality of that model. For the plastic arts can certainly produce "images" of virtue (*Rep.* III 401B), which not only predispose the minds of the young to "correspondence with beautiful reason" by conditioning them spontaneously to love the beautiful in all its guises and to hate the ugly (*Rep.* III 401D iff, 402A 2, *Laws* II 653B-C, 654C-D, 659E, III 689A. The editors rightly compare Arist. *E.N.* II 3,2). These "images" also serve as lures to the search for Ideas (*Rep.* III 402C 7, *μήτε . . . ἀτιμάζωμεν*, which is explained in B2 as *προϋθυμούμεθα διαγιγνώσκειν*). There is no real contradiction between

this passage and VII 522A). It is hard to see how a plastic art-work could do either of these things were it not somehow a "true" representation of a "true" model, though it may be that λόγοι are "clearer" representations of the incorporeal than any plastic images can be (*Polit.* 286A; though it should be noted that λόγος here signifies "philosophic account," rather than "language" in general, and implies, therefore, no clear-cut distinction between literary and nonliterary art. The same is true of 277C). From the other side, too, the remarks on the falsity of poetry in *Rep.* X 598Dff seem merely to continue those on the falsity of painting in 597Bff.

11. It is noteworthy, in this connection, that beauty — τὰ καλὰ — is assumed to be the model for "eikastic"; i.e., correct, imitation, in *Soph.* 235E 6, 236B 5.

12. 401A 2-3, B 6. Also included are artifacts and natural objects; but that is a matter for *Aporia* 2.

13. *Laws* II 654Ef, 660A, *Rep.* III 399A, 397A-B. Cf. the expressionism desired by Socrates in *Xen. Mem.* III 10, 8, and perhaps attributed to Polygnotus by Aristotle, and to Euphranor by Pliny (J. Overbeck, *Antike Schriftquellen z. Gesch. d. bild. Künste bei d. Griechen* [1868] nos. 1077-79; 1802; cf. Fronto in no. 1726).

14. Perhaps the hard phrase of *Laws* II 668B 2 is relevant here: "music which keeps its likeness to the copy of the noble" (ἔχουσιν τὴν ὁμοιότητα τῷ τοῦ καλοῦ μιμήματι). The "noble" perhaps is the Idea; the "copy," human action based upon the Idea; and it is this action that music represents.

15. The antithesis is: "beautiful in relation to something else" (πρὸς τι καλὰ, 51C 6).

16. So, B. Bosanquet, *History of Aesthetics* (1904) 34. He is followed by, among many others, R. Hackforth, *Plato's Examination of Pleasure* (1945) 99: "Beauty as here conceived is a differentiated unity . . . the pure colour is a whole of parts simply inasmuch as it is a unity extended in space, the pure note is a whole of parts inasmuch as it is a unity extended in time . . ."

17. Cf. Bosanquet (above, n.16) 32-33, 52 ("unity in variety"; "structural totality").

18. So, M. C. Nahm, *Aesthetic Experience and its Presuppositions* (1946) 113; 116, n.75.

19. Cf. the "beautiful" triangles of *Tim.* 53E-54D, with their relation to "forms and numbers" (53B), and the pleasurable tones of *Tim.* 80B, with their relation to divine harmonies; and, for the emphasis upon the orderliness of the world of Ideas, *Rep.* VI 500C.

20. A preliminary objection to this view is the emphasis laid on the mechanical production of these figures (by compasses, turners' lathes, carpenters' squares and rules, 51C). The effect of this emphasis is to remove them from the sphere of "imitative" art, wherein the artist arranges in the light of the form to be imposed (*Gorg.* 503D-504A; *Laws* X 903B-D).

21. E.g., tragedy and comedy, 48A-50B; perhaps sculpture and painting (ζῶα καὶ ζωγραφήματα, 51C 2). All the translators understand ζῶα as "animals," or "living creatures," and, of course, they may well be right. But it may mean "figures," or even "sculptures." In that case, the "other things" (καθ' ἅπερ ἄλλα, 51C 7) which are contrasted as πρὸς τι beautiful with the καθ' αὐτά beautiful tones, colors, lines, and geometrical figures, may mean "other shapes" (as, indeed, Taylor and Diès understand it, anyway), referring to the representational shapes of naturalistic sculpture and painting.

22. Despite the translations of Hackforth, Diès, and Taylor: "colors we call beautiful." Fowler is more careful: "what are called beautiful colors."

23. *Hipp. Mai.* 297E<sup>f</sup>; *Arist. Top.* VI 146a 21f. For the eye especially, cf. *Gorg.* 474D; Democritus, *Vors.* 55B 194.

24. R. Hackforth, *Plato's Examination of Pleasure* 98, interprets "καθ' αὐτά beautiful" as "intrinsically, not relatively, beautiful; that is to say, their beauty does not depend on contrast with something less beautiful, or positively ugly, but belongs to them *per se*."

25. N. R. Murphy, *Interpretation* 244-45, does not wish to include living beings or works of representational art among instances of "relational" beauty. But if he were to include them, he would do so, he suggests, on the ground that the beauty of a ζῶον might be enhanced by gorgeous clothing, and that of a ζωγράφημα by being set against a particular background.

26. *Gorg.* 474D-475A grounds beauty in (1) utility or advantage; (2) pleasure; or (3) both. And *Hipp. Mai.* considers each of these two grounds as a possible definition of beauty: (1) utility or advantage, 295C<sup>f</sup>, 296D-E; (2) pleasure, 297E-298A. "Utility" and "pleasure" may seem intended to correspond with the two kinds of beauty we have been distinguishing: that of external, and that of internal, purposiveness, respectively. If so, *Gorgias* and *Hippias* may seem to identify the beauty of internal purposiveness with pleasure, or with what produces pleasure, and thus support a like identification of the similar objects of *Philebus*.

Before reaching this conclusion, however, we should note that both passages are dialectical. In *Gorgias*, Socrates is arguing, against Polus, that to suffer injustice is more advantageous than to commit it. He exploits Polus' concession that to suffer it is more "beautiful" (= "ethically admirable"), though not more advantageous, by basing beauty in general (including visual and auditory beauty) on either advantage or pleasure or both, and by drawing the obvious conclusion that to suffer injustice is more advantageous, since it is certainly not more pleasant. "Beauty" here is primarily "the admirable"; the kind of pleasure is not specified; and it is not even clear that, if it came to that, Socrates would ever admit pleasure by itself as the definition, criterion, or ground, of beauty. The course of the argument in *Hippias*, indeed, suggests that he would not. In the end, *Hippias* is unable to keep the two definitions distinct. The "pleasure" which is the definition of beauty in 297 E<sup>f</sup> comes finally to be specified (303E) as the "most innocent" (ἀσυνέσταται); i.e., the "best" (βέλτισται); i.e., the "advantageous" (ωφέλιμαι).

27. *Phaedo* 100B-E, *Rep.* V 476B-D, and the further references in H. Perls, *Platon II* (1945), p. 41, to *Parm.* 130E, 131A, *Gorg.* 497E, *Crat.* 416D, *Hipp. Mai.* 287C, *Symp.* 211B.

28. *Rep.* III 397B, 398D, 400A, D; *Laws* VII 795E.

29. G. R. Morrow, *Plato's Cretan City* (1960) 342, interprets this differently: as referring to "a tasteless display of meaningless virtuosity."

30. Virtue: *Rep.* III 410D-411A, 412A, 413E, VIII 554E, IX 591D, X 603C-608B; *Phaedo* 93C; *Laws* II 653B, 659E. See *Rep.* III 401D, *Cleitophon* 407C-D, *Phaedo* 61A, and other references to the soul as "attuned," "harmonious."

31. Wisdom: *Laws* III 688B, 689D, 691A, 696C.

32. Justice: *Rep.* IV 441D-E, 444C-E, IX 586E, 589A-B, 590A-592B.

33. Temperance: *Rep.* III 404E, IV 430E-432B, 442C; *Phaedrus* 237 D-E; *Laws* I 626E-628A, III 689D, 691A, 693C, IV 716D.

34. Justice and Temperance: *Gorg.* 503D-504E (cf. *YCS* 10 (1947) 157-59); *Symp.* 209A; *Laws* III 696C, X 906A-B, C.

35. Despite W. A. Wick, *Metaphysics and the New Logic* (1942) 65-67, and 67, n.23.

36. The view that truth depends on purity, i.e., on the absence of alien admixture, or internal contradiction, or, positively expressed, on internal unity which, in the case of a simple object, consists of its simplicity, and, in the case of a composite, of the harmonious interrelationship of its parts, is that of G. Schneider, *Die platonische Metaphysik auf grund der im Philebos gegebenen Principien . . . dargestellt* (1884) 72-75. The essentials of Schneider's position are quoted from an earlier article by R. G. Bury in Appendix F, p. 205, of his edition of the *Philebus*.

37. In *Phil.* 59C, stability is linked with purity and truth to characterize the Ideas in such a way (τό τε βέβαιον καὶ τὸ καθαρὸν καὶ ἀληθές καὶ . . . ἐλικρινές) that only two qualities seem to be named (τὸ βέβαιον-ἀληθές and τὸ καθαρὸν-ἐλικρινές), and stability and truth become one.

38. Or a "beautiful" one (cf. above, n. 11); cf. also the "likeness to the imitation of the beautiful" as the aim of "serious" art in *Laws* II 668B 2 (above, n. 14).

39. Although, if it is thought of as pure play, it would not be true (because even the truth of coherence implies a referrent); and it would be beautiful by courtesy only (as yielding "pure" pleasure). For παιδιά in this sense (which is more than the παιδιά which differentiates imitative art in general from "serious" crafts and therapeutic processes, *Soph.* 234B, *Polit.* 288C, *Phaedrus* 276E, *Laws* 685A, 889D, *Rep.* 599A-B, etc.), cf. *Laws* II 667E, 673C 9, *Crit.* 116B. For the "inconsequential" pleasure which results, cf. *Laws* 667E, *Rep.* 357B 7.

40. This is fundamental for Plato, despite some apparent statements to the contrary (p. 179) above. The fullest analysis of "formal" factors we find in Plato occurs in *Laws* II 669C-E and its complement, III 700A-701A. Both passages are concerned with congruities and incongruities between thought and expression; or, in Plato's terms, with the proper "separation" of materials and the proper "combination" and "correspondence" of parts. In 669C-E, the emphasis is upon the "correspondence" between the words, on the one hand, and the rhythms and modes, on the other (cf. VII 802D-E, VIII 835A); upon the "separation" of animal cries and mechanical noises, which bad poets jumble, in their display pieces, with the sound of human voices (cf. *Rep.* III 396B, 397A); and upon the converse "combination" of words, melody, and rhythm, which bad poets often present separately. In 700A-701A, the emphasis is upon the proper "separation" of musical genres (hymns, dithyrambs, threnoe, etc.), as opposed to the practice of contemporary poets who, in their concern for pleasure, confuse everything with everything else, as if there were no "correctness" in music.

This sounds like formal analysis, with its stress on "good" and "bad" poetry. It is to be noted, however, that 669C-E follows directly the passage which distinguishes beauty from correctness and pleasure, and removes it from the sphere of the formal; that the chief emphasis, even in 669, is upon subject-matter — upon the faithful presentation of that subject-matter, primarily by means of the words, and upon the necessity that melody and rhythms be adapted



to the words (cf. *Laws* 661C), exactly as in *Rep.* III 397B–C, 398D, 399A–B, 400A,D; and that 661C, e.g., shows clearly just how moral the subject-matter of 669C–E is.

41. This inference is not explicit, but seems to be intended by the phraseology of *Phil.* 53B 1: ἀληθέστατον . . . καὶ ἅμα δὴ κάλλιστον. Cf. 53B 5: λευκότερον ἅμα καὶ κάλλιον καὶ ἀληθέστερον; and 53C 1–2 ἡδίων καὶ ἀληθεστέρα καὶ καλλίων.

42. The “modern” in question is T. M. Greene, *The Arts and the Art of Criticism*, ch. xxiii, especially pp. 442–60.

43. Plato’s truth consists in correspondence with the Idea; but his methodological approaches to the Idea, especially the method of ascent to, and descent from, the Good in *Rep.* VI–VII, seem to involve the same positive and negative elements of coherence as our modern’s approach to the real. It can be argued that they all proceed, negatively, by removing internal self-contradiction in the initial postulate; and, positively, by comprehending the purified postulate in wider and wider contexts; and that they verify the result by a deduction which exhibits the coherence of one with all.

44. Although it should be kept in mind that the “model” in question is a mental construct of the artist (if we can transfer, as surely we can, the remark of *Rep.* VI 484C 7, ἐναργὲς ἐν τῇ ψυχῇ ἔχοντες παράδειγμα, from the philosopher to the painters of C 8). It is his interpretation and evaluation of an objective fact or situation: cf. W. J. Verdenius, *Mimesis* 27f, 30ff, *et passim*.

45. He also does so conversely: by treating apparently formal entities as equivalent with substantive entities qualified as good. He does this by making the very wholeness of an object an implicit standard of value on which depend almost all his attitudes, whether of approval or disapproval; by describing the artist’s task as if it consisted exclusively in arranging the parts of his material into a coherent and stable whole (*Gorg.* 503D–504A; *Laws* X 903B–D); by identifying beauty with (any) proportionality, or with the symmetry of parts in a whole (e.g., *Phil.* 64D–E; *Tim.* 87D; *Soph.* 228A; *Laws* V 741A); and by implicitly identifying “measure,” or any quantitative determination of an undetermined material, with “right measure” (*Phil.* 26B). Thereby — since it becomes obvious, on reflection, that in all these cases their value resides, not in their wholeness *per se*, but in their being a unique integration of a specifically qualified subject-matter in the light of an external standard — Plato seems to suggest that there is no such thing as “form” by itself. . . .

This, of course, is too large a subject for an incidental note. I intend to go into it further in a study of the influence of the art-analogy on Plato’s thought-habits.

46. As, indeed, Socrates’ first speech shows: 237C–238C; cf. 237D 1. For what can happen when internal consistency is the only standard, cf. *Crat.* 436D.

47. *Gorg.* 503D–E, 501B, *Laws* X 903B–C; cf. *Polit.* 283D–284E, on the external reference of the “just mean” (τὸ μέτριον) in the production of “all good and beautiful things”. The *Gorgias* describes the prerequisite in terms of the artist’s procedure of “looking off toward something” (ἀποβλέπειν πρὸς τι) as he constructs. This phrase is one of the commonest in Plato’s accounts of art or craft. It seems to have been derived from the practice of painters and sculptors (*Rep.* IV 472D, VI 484C–D, 500C–501C, etc.), and to have been thence transferred to that of artisans (*Rep.* X 596A–B, 597B, *Crat.* 389C).

48. *Phaedr.* 271C 10, 261A 8; cf. 269C 2, 270B 8, 272A 3, 271A 2.

49. Perhaps, however, *Gorg.* 501A is the more relevant passage. This at first calls cookery a knack, rather than an art, not because it aims at pleasure, but because it has not investigated the nature or cause of the pleasures at which it aims, and "with a total lack of system, has made virtually no attempt to classify them" (ἀλόγως τε παντάπασιν, ὥς ἔπος εἰπεῖν οὐδὲν διαριθμησαμένη). Maybe "classify" overtranslates διαριθμησαμένη (the Schol. interprets it as "distinguish": διακρίνασα), but that is the meaning in *Phaedrus* 273E 1 (cf. 270D 6, and the apparent explication of the term in *Laws* X 894B 1, (ἐν εἰδεσι λαβεῖν μετ' ἀριθμοῦ) and *Phil.* 16C-19A). In any case, the term strongly suggests the method of Division in *Phaedrus* whereby types of soul to be persuaded, and types of discourse to persuade them, are correlated; and it is, in fact, numeration or classification in some sense which here, in *Gorgias*, distinguishes art from knack, not yet the fact that art aims at good, and knack only at pleasure. By that distinction, the mode of rhetoric in the *Phaedrus* under discussion is automatically an art. However, it becomes immediately apparent in *Gorgias* (501B-C) that the systematic "numeration" of kinds of pleasure implies a distinction between "good" and "bad" pleasures (cf. 499C-500A), and a recourse, therefore, to the standard of the "good" of the subject-matter. That is, "art" seems to denote system, and connote the intention to achieve the good of the subject-matter. The same implication and the same connotation lurk in the classification of souls and discourses in our passage of *Phaedrus*, as we shall see immediately.

50. See n.48 and *Gorg.* 453A (cf. Callicles in 486A-B); *Hipp. Mai.* 304A-B.

51. Which is just "correspondence with reality": *Rep.* III 413A, VI 490B; *Crat.* 385B; *Soph.* 263B, etc.

52. In a discussion of Plato's aesthetics, it is no doubt disconcerting to hear that it is only the philosopher, and explicitly not the poet, who achieves beauty, as we have been defining beauty, in his discourse. Plato's reasoning, however, should now be familiar. Beauty is the obverse of truth, and the poet, *qua* poet, is not concerned with truth (cf. "Differentiation," 394 and n.29). What he is concerned with seems to vary with the context in which he is being discussed: earlier, he seemed to be concerned with inspired "opinion"; here, with the mechanical arrangement of his material.

53. See "Differentiation," pp. 395-96.

54. The abstract art of *Aporia* 6 is a special case. It is both serious and, in a way, representational; but because its reference is so general and so relatively inexpressive, it might often be hard, in practice, to distinguish from παιδιά; cf. above, n.39.



## ELECTRA BY SOPHOCLES: THE DIALECTICAL DESIGN (PART II)

THOMAS M. WOODARD

THE present essay extends an interpretation of the *Electra* previously advanced in these pages.<sup>1</sup> There an effort was made to consider what Electra and Orestes might have conveyed to the original audience. It was argued that they make certain antithetical heroic ideals flesh; and that they are associated with a pair of yoked contraries, *logos* and *ergon*. Now, in the sequel, I wish, first, to continue the study of the characters and in this way locate the rôle of cosmic forces in the play; and, second, to discuss some features of the plot, especially as it reveals Sophocles' view of justice.

### I

Practically every interpretation of Sophocles' work has assumed that his characters were intended to be lifelike figures, idealized perhaps (according to his own dictum),<sup>2</sup> but possessing all the components of human personality. Even a critic like H. D. F. Kitto, who points to forces above and beyond character, will praise Sophocles' "realism," his "character-drawing," and his "human drama," which "portrays recognizable human characters in action and in passion, grappling with each other with all their strength."<sup>3</sup>

The *Electra* might seem to support this assumption quite well (perhaps better than the *Ajax*, say, or the *Philoctetes*). Even the numerous, lengthy set-speeches flow with ease from point to point, and breathe with a natural rhythm. In fact there is a danger that we may fail to appreciate fully the powerful realism of the play. Nonetheless, it seems to me necessary to run this risk in order to appreciate what is, in my view, Sophocles' essential achievement in characterization, the subtle interpenetration of living traits and a highly selective set of universal references. We cannot understand (or adequately respond to) the characters in our play unless we realize that certain principles or concepts define them and unify their words and behavior.

Now, to put this point differently, let me suggest that our interpretation should examine both character and circumstance, rather than one to the exclusion of the other. Sophoclean characters carry with them



a "world" — moral, conceptual, cosmic — in which they have their dramatic life. We understand Orestes and Electra only by understanding a vast pattern of values, ideas, and forces to which they constantly refer us. The characters participate in the cosmos; and they are the medium through which we, as audience, perceive cosmic circumstance. At the same time, we see the characters through the circumstances defining them. Electra's portrait in the theater, for instance, is drawn in good part from her situation, her perspective on it, and her struggles with it.<sup>4</sup> And it is also drawn from her connection with the universal principles implied in *logos*.

Because sufficient attention has not been paid to what I am calling cosmic circumstance, criticism of the *Electra* has failed to see precisely how the heroine changes in the course of the action. As we saw in the first part of this study, neither Electra's personality nor her moral temper alters, but she corrects her relationship to both *logos* and *ergon*, and learns to assign them new values. When she breaks down on hearing the false story, we witness the breakdown of *logos* split off from *ergon*. This violent experience synchronizes with a deluded opinion about the tokens; but it also begins a purge of the spurious side of *logos*. Out of despair occasioned by a *logos* rises the resolve to act. By the end, Electra, without ceasing to be herself, and without losing her affinity to *logos*, can join effectively in the *ergon* of vengeance.

In a similar way, the dynamics of the whole play are educational. Every character undergoes significant learning, except the Paedagogus, whose status as pedagogue seems to preserve him.<sup>5</sup> Learning involves a character's apprehension of circumstance. The characters in the *Electra* learn because "character" implies an intellectual vision as well as an appropriate temperament. Through the eyes of the characters we, too, see a world order, a different one for each of them; and we learn while they learn. But out of the complementary partial visions of the several characters emerges a universe which we may call Sophoclean. The following pages investigate the principles informing this universe, as we apprehend them through the medium of character, and at the same time, study the characters intensively in their various conceptions of the universe. My first theme will be that Orestes and Electra embody distinct visions of time. We shall find again a dialectical development from initial opposition to final resolution; and we shall see again how this exterior structure finds its clouded mirror-image in the dramatic transformation of Electra.

The opening speech of the Paedagogus in the Prologue conveys a special sense of time. Everything leads us to the present moment. First,

Agamemnon's historic campaign is set against the time at hand.<sup>6</sup> Then, we pass chronologically along a straight line: from ancient Argos and the early wanderings of Io, through the period of the murder of Agamemnon, to the present maturity of Orestes, which crowns his own history, and the morning at hand, the *kairos*.

Again, in miniature,

ἦνευκα καῖέσωσα καῖεθρεψάμην (line 13)

the Paedagogus speaks of actions performed over a period of time divided into discrete portions but moving continuously toward the present.

In his opening statement, attempting to bring Orestes to a full awareness of temporal immediacy and the *kairos*, the Paedagogus tightly adheres to a linear, physical conception of time. When the great exhibition of his mentality comes in the *rhexis*, his story draws its verisimilitude and momentum in part from the ordering of concrete detail in a strict chronological sequence. First, reference to the events which Orestes won before the fatal chariot-race. Then, the time of day (line 699); the order of events preparatory to the start; the moment-by-moment account of the race; and what happened afterward. Explicit references to the temporal order of things are numerous.<sup>7</sup> The story hits only the high spots and so chronology remains visible throughout. The Paedagogus sees time as a quantitative progression; hence his use of the ordinals from one to ten. Time is objective and on-going within the whole narrative.

Time, for the Paedagogus, is teleological and means movement forward toward a goal. The present is the *kairos*, and the critical moment demands decisiveness. Thus we understand his concern with the precisions of the moment, and his sense of action in time perceived by the senses as one races into the future.

Orestes shares completely this vision of time. His opening speech amounts to a schedule. He uses time; and sees it as useful. It will even aid in concealment: the change that time has brought to the old man will prevent his recognition in the house (line 42). He orders his whole statement chronologically, as his Tutor had done, and temporal sequence is intrinsic, we gather, to his idea of a sound plan. First, the reference back to the previous speaker; then, what he himself had done in the past; what should be done in the immediate future; the victory that will result; finally, the commencement of action in the present. Thus his plan affects us as logical and realistic, partly because of its reliance on a linear progression of physical time.

Electra's threnody shatters the conception of time which we accept so readily from the men. Her opening words show that she lives, not within a thrust forward where the passage of time means change, but within a rhythm constantly repeating itself. As the Paedagogus saw it, night had passed, day was beginning, and a new endeavor was at hand. For Electra, day and night have equal qualities: they merge in her suffering and lamentation.<sup>8</sup>

Electra sees time in a cosmic rather than an historical setting. The endless rhythm of night and day serves as her image for a boundless future.<sup>9</sup> Amid sun, starlight, earth, and air, there is neither crisis, freshness, nor progress.

Electra's *threnos* contrasts sharply in temporal organization with Orestes' directive. She starts in the cosmic present, moves to the indefinite past, then to the definite past, then to the indefinite future, and back to the present lament. Change she envisages as a possibility only in a future hovering out of reach. In the present there is no change. And the present encloses recurrent, obsessive events of the past, the subject of her lamentations.

Electra lives in a world of petrified time. Her emblems are Niobe, rock-bound and always tearful (lines 150-52),<sup>10</sup> and the nightingale, divine messenger and always wailing (lines 148-49). Time is not etched on a line, nor laid out in a finished past, vital present, and promising future. She sees the future as a perpetuation of her present activity: "I will not cease threnody and moaning as long as I live" (lines 104-6). In fact, ceaselessness lies near the essence of her attitude. In their first words, the Chorus ask why she persists in "ceaseless wailing" (line 123). Electra's affirmation of this quality of her lamentation occupies the first Strophe and first Antistrophe.

Electra lives in a world of perpetuity. Repetition has replaced change and has converted progress into static perseverance. The term best expressing this quality of her world is *aei*, "always," "forever," which implies both unchanging activities and a cancellation of temporal flux. Thus, in their first words again, the Chorus mildly reproach Electra for "always (*aei*) melting away in ceaseless wailing" (lines 122-23).<sup>11</sup> Electra so often vows never to cease lamentation because she projects a future without newness, a future of constancy to her present grievous customs and tormented character: "I will not check this *atē* as long as I live" (lines 223-25). We realize now that night and day lose their distinctness for her because, through the sense of time implied by *aei*, they become merely repetitive. So she sees herself in the cosmic setting.

I, both by day and by night, forever . . . (line 259)

The whole Parodos in fact portrays a singular mode of existence, in which suffering, endurance, and mourning have become ends in themselves, and in which the vivid teleological world of the men, with its sense of the right time for a definite act, has been replaced by the indefinite dimensions of timelessness. Electra's sense of life is qualitative, not quantitative. Her laments are not only unceasing but numberless (line 232). When the Chorus offer as palliative hope a faith in the divine healing of time, "a kindly god" (line 179), Electra rejects it, implying that she sees her life as a whole:

But most of my life has already passed by  
 Hopeless, and I have strength no longer.

(lines 185-86)

Her life is indeed present as a whole at all times, because it remains identical with itself,<sup>12</sup> but also because she keeps the past present as active memory. For the men, the past was past; but Electra founds her life of lament on "not forgetting" the unhonored dead.

Electra lives out of time, in the sense that she is heedless of its flux, its quantity, and its possibilities. She has a god-like constancy, a portion of the eternity hinted by *aei*.<sup>13</sup> Yet this stance also implies mere stubbornness, a refusal to alter behavior or opinions no matter what. Chrysothemis reproaches her along this line as soon as she enters:

Can't you learn, in all this time,  
 Not to give way to your empty anger?

(lines 330-31)

Chrysothemis would have time mean change and learning; she represents, in a feeble and rather ignoble shape, the men's vision of change and temporal progress. Electra's reply rests on the moral necessity of remaining exactly as she is. This is heroic stubbornness, noble yet ineffective. Electra must alter for vengeance to arrive.

As the play moves on, we find that Electra does modify her conception of time, and eventually comes around to a share in that of the men. In the first scenes with her sister and her mother, however, she retains all the qualities found in the Prologue and Parodos. The dramatic technique of these scenes matches her changelessness. Both take place on a timeless level. Like her threnody and the set-speech describing the torments of her daily life, both are "typical" rather than tied to a specific occasion.<sup>14</sup> They could occur at any time. They express a continuing state of mind and reveal a continuing state of affairs. They are timeless, also, in the sense that they advance the action not at all. Especially the



violent, formal scene between mother and daughter portrays that relationship as it has been since the murder of Agamemnon, recapitulating the old arguments and old reproaches, which must have been exchanged a thousand times over the years.<sup>15</sup> Such a scene is "ideal," in the sense of summing up, for the audience, a situation existing through an indefinite period. In the first encounter of the sisters we have much of the same quality. Aegisthus' threat is hardly likely to be his first; and, however that may be, its dramatic function is to indicate the bitter relations between step-father and step-daughter. For this reason, in part, the reported dream has little effect on Electra. This omen, rather than provoking special hopes or any lasting reaction, only serves to bring out dramatically her typical attitudes and responses.

The Paedagogus brings on stage a new kind of scene, as well as a contrasting sense of time. We pass from the typical and perpetual to the unique and irrepeatable. He presents Electra with the catastrophic, but undeniable, effects of change. Her reasons for endurance, as for hope, are undermined by the alleged death of her brother. Now her education in the exigencies of action and in the nature of physical time properly commences. We shall see that the split between heroic constancy and a self-defeating resistance to learning will begin to mend. But only gradually, so that we may mark the stages with precision along a scale leading from her original timelessness to a partnership in the men's awareness of the immediacies of present and future.

This new phase in Electra's development in the play commences at the very words of the Paedagogus, "Orestes is dead" (line 673). Electra instantly responds, "this is the day I die" (line 674). This marks her first awareness of the momentary and unique as opposed to the ceaseless, her first realization that a single day might be decisive.

Now Electra undergoes change, with utmost pathos. The "rest of time" takes on horror now,<sup>16</sup> and changelessness becomes abhorrent (lines 817-19). An alternative attitude toward time begins to replace despair about time in the next scene, along with her decision to act. She contrasts past indefinite hope with present concrete despondency: *'εγὼ δ' ἔως μὲν . . . νῦν δ' ἡνίκ' οὐκέτ' ἔστιν* (lines 951-54). Therefore she urges the decisive act. By the end of the discussion, Electra is defending action and change, while, ironically enough, Chrysothemis talks the language of steadfastness.<sup>17</sup>

The total reversal which the recognition scene brings in Electra's situation does not significantly alter her sense of time; for she has already learned that a single moment can turn everything around. But her lament over the urn shows an intense awareness of divisions within time,

specifically of the gulf between past and present.<sup>18</sup> Formerly, she had denied these divisions. Within the antithesis of past and present so important in the lament, the effect of Orestes' return is to reverse Electra's valuation of each. The present now implies life and salvation, the past, death.<sup>19</sup>

The lyric interlude (lines 1232-87) dramatizes the tension between Orestes' insistence on the exigencies of the *kairos* and Electra's resistance to further modification of her original changelessness. Similarly, within Electra's outlook we notice an acute tension between her former sense of eternity and her new awareness of the unique present. The interlude carries her toward appreciation of the *kairos*, however, and this evolution will be completed by the important transitional scene that follows.<sup>20</sup> Orestes more than once makes sharp distinctions between one time and another.<sup>21</sup> Electra accepts these in general, and rejoices in a change for the better; but she goes on to deny that relief will ever replace her torments. "All time to come" could serve to recite her woes (lines 1254-55). She dwells on how long she has waited (lines 1273-74). Thus she makes us feel again her affinity to a life without change.

In the dialogue following, first Orestes in a terse set-speech, then the Paedagogus with energetic rebuke, exhort Electra to acknowledge the crisis and to speed rather than slow vengeance. Orestes opposes the *chronou kairos* to talk (line 1292), and demands attention to *ho parōn nun chronos* (line 1293). The endeavor underway he calls *hē nun hodos* (line 1295). Electra at last enters into the men's consciousness of immediacy. She accepts Orestes' view of the situation; and she adopts his language: *ho parōn daimōn* (line 1306) and *hodos* (lines 1314 and 1318).

The Paedagogus hammers on the *motifs* of the *kairos* and *akmē*,<sup>22</sup> and, especially, on the importance of the present moment, *nun* (no less than six occurrences).<sup>23</sup>

The scenes comprising the so-called Exodos put on stage, bodily and visually, the moment of crisis, the *kairos* or *akmē*. Their speed and intensity reflect the sense of present immediacy and of the inexorable sequence of events which the men have expressed all along. Thus the climax of the *Electra* corresponds, in its temporal quality, to the concept of time which the heroine had resisted, but toward which the hero had pointed. Yet we shall see that, even at the climax and finale of the play, Electra still retains, as her hallmark and as part of her dignity, something of the virtual transcendence over time which she displayed in the beginning.

With the vigorous Paedagogus, the silent, and no doubt very capable, Pylades, and the ever-confident Orestes, all at work, events succeed one

another with rapidity: the cry and death of Clytaemnestra; reappearance of the men; Aegisthus sighted approaching; the men hide; Aegisthus enters; and finally men bring Clytaemnestra's body forth, and Orestes takes Aegisthus prisoner. Through all this, Electra is on stage, having been off only during the third Stasimon. She plays no direct part in the action; but her language mirrors it. Her first, excited words on re-entering have the coloring of immediacy: *ἄνδρες αὐτίκα τελοῦσι τοῦργον* (lines 1398–99). She continues to speak in the present or future, with adverbs implying speed.<sup>24</sup> She knows what is happening in the palace at the moment that it happens. But, at the crucial juncture, when Clytaemnestra cries out for mercy from her son, Electra's shouted exhortation harks back to the murder of her father, and the small pity received by him then from his wife. Electra remains mindful of that original source of all her grief, and her present mindfulness of the past rings out as a blow for vengeance.

In the final scene of the play, Aegisthus believes that time has brought change, and to his advantage; but finds it hard to believe that Electra, "so bold in time past" (lines 1445–46), has become pleasanter, as she pretends when giving him the good news about Orestes. She mocks him by alleging, "through time I have gained some sense" (lines 1464–65). Chrysothemis had urged just this.<sup>25</sup> But we know, however, that Electra has hardly grown in "prudence." Time vindicated her obduracy, while modifying its expression. Now she can treat time ironically.

Electra's last speech in the drama is predominantly about time. She speaks only when Aegisthus seems likely to delay his execution, and only when Orestes himself seems more inclined to trade cutting repartee than to work with his sword. Aegisthus begs to "say a few words," but Electra exhorts her brother to reject time-consuming speeches. Her own language is crucial:

*τί γὰρ βροτῶν ἂν σὺν κακοῖς μεμειγμένων  
θνήσκειν ὁ μέλλων τοῦ χρόνου κέρδος φέροι;*  
(lines 1485–86)<sup>26</sup>

These two ambiguous lines point two quite different morals. "Since men are involved in woes, and a man is certain to die, how can time bring profit?" If we take the lines this way, gnomically, Electra asserts again her original heroic rejection of time. "When a man is involved in woes and about to die, how can time matter?"<sup>27</sup>

Yet Electra's words can mean simply, "How could a man fated to die profit by delay?"<sup>28</sup> In this case, she now urges speed, accepts and affirms temporal immediacy. And how could *she* have profited by

hesitating all those years to risk her own life? She implies antagonism to her former constancy, disaffection with the years of waiting. "How can a man who defers his death profit by the delay?"<sup>29</sup> The true *kerdos* lies in the heroic willingness to risk everything; and Electra had reached this only after many years. She, too, was "involved in miseries"; but she sought to live on, no matter how badly.<sup>30</sup> Now, on the contrary, she grants the Paedagogus' point that, in the midst of ills, τὸ μέλλειν κακόν (line 1337).

And so she completes her speech by urging that Aegisthus be killed with "utmost haste" (line 1487). "This is the only release," she says, "that I might find from my former woes" (lines 1489-90). The obsessive past will find its remedy in immediate present action.

The play ends on this note of speed. Orestes bids Aegisthus enter "speedily" (line 1491); and chides him for lingering (line 1501). Orestes leaves us with his opinion that all wrong-doing should be punished by death "straightaway" (line 1505); if crime received instantaneous punishment it would diminish. And the Choral tag at the end of the play stresses the completion of a temporal process, perfected by what we have just witnessed, τῇ νῦν ὀρμῇ (line 1510).

The rapid succession of events and upheavals in the Exodus conveys to us an intensified sense of temporal flux. The word *chronos* in the play usually implies this flow, usually implies "the passage of time" or "the amount of time." So it does when Orestes first uses it in the Prologue (line 42), and so also in Electra's last two speeches (lines 1464 and 1485). In this sense, Electra sets herself against *chronos*, refuses to live in it. She tries to cancel it, or, what verges on the same thing, to expand it indefinitely so that it approaches eternity. Her stance takes account of *chronos* only as *ho pas chronos* (lines 1253-55); she sees her life as a *πάμμηνος αἰών* (lines 851-52). This is time without a "now"; time become repetition. But we have also seen that in the last scenes of the play Electra shows awareness of the other sense of *chronos*, and proves that she can participate in it up to the hilt. Therefore, the character of Electra, as it emerges from an education in time, comes close to uniting the two temporal hemispheres that we encountered in the Prologue scene. The action of the play unites them; the partnership of brother and sister dramatizes their coordination; and we find them joined as well within the fully realized figure of Electra.

The significant term *aei* altogether disappears from the play after Electra's last lyric verses.<sup>31</sup> As the action moves into the men's sphere, and as vengeance approaches, another verbal emblem for the dramatic and dialectical situation comes to the fore, the root *tel-*.<sup>32</sup> The last word



of the play, *teleōthen*, completes or perfects the action on this note. The root *tel-* implies the directed temporal process which we called teleological above; but it also implies the completion of directed movement in space. And, in fact, concurrent with the dialectic of time, the *Electra* conveys one of space, which we may discuss much more briefly, because its development parallels that of time at every point.

The lucid, concentrated introduction which the Paedagogus gives us involves a sequential ordering of place. We move from remote to immediate. First there is a reference to remote Troy (line 1), contrasted to "you who are here" (lines 2-3). Then the Paedagogus directs our glance to the Argive plain stretching out in the distance; next, from the general district or domain of Io to the agora and temple of Apollo Lycaeus (perhaps some six miles away); then to the Heraeum (perhaps two miles away); then into Mycenae the town, and finally to the palace of the Pelopidae, in front of us. The House, the massive feature of the décor, implies the attainment of the goal of the men's journey. The Paedagogus mentions travel more than once (lines 8 and 20), and we too travel in imagination as Agamemnon's far-flung expedition, and the wanderings of Io, presented as the daughter of the river flowing through the area, give way finally to the confines of the temple of Hera, guardian of the private hearth. The exact place for action has been reached (lines 21-22).

The Paedagogus guides us along a line leading directly to the immediate locale. Place, as time, converges on the scene before us. The men are engaged in an enterprise which, like a trip, has a concrete terminus. The three men, whom we have just seen walk onto the stage, think in terms of movement and progress toward a tangible goal. Their world is defined by the precisions of geography as it is by those of chronology. What they know they know by "clear signs."<sup>33</sup> They mainly learn of the world by sight; though, also, to a significantly less extent, by hearing.<sup>34</sup> For vision provides the most definite spatial evidence. The world for them means the physical world, presented by the senses; but this world shows an intrinsic, intelligible order.

The actions that Orestes proposes are spatially logical. He calculates where everyone should go, as well as what they should do. His language highlights physical movements.<sup>35</sup> The endeavor at hand he calls a *hodos* (line 68).

The Paedagogus' great *mythos* exhibits a mathematical ordering of space. The scene is laid out diagrammatically: the race-course and the posts; and positions in the race at the crucial moments.<sup>36</sup> The numerical ordering is striking.<sup>37</sup> All these characteristics make the story vivid and,

in a precise sense, realistic. They reflect a mentality defined by quantities, linear patterns, visual objects, and a linear sense of movement and change. The men's world is spatially definite, glittering with sharp outlines and tangible form.

Electra's world, by contrast, as we first encounter it, is spatially indefinite. She shows, in fact, little or no concern with her concrete location. Her opening words refer to the cosmic setting, the three elements, not to the local scene at all. She does not see herself bound by physical laws. Rather, in her threnody, though motionless before us, she moves freely in allusion, unchecked by geography. She passes from the sun to the earth and air — these equal-sharers in space, she implies<sup>38</sup> — in and out of the house, to the "remote land," back home, then to the stars and sun again, away to the underworld, and finally back to her own situation, presented not in terms of where she is but how she feels.

In Electra's imagination, invisible locales stand beside visible ones: the underworld is at least as real to her as the courtyard. She lives in touch with images of places beyond her actual environment.<sup>39</sup> She heeds very little the restrictions of sense perception, and "sees" in a highly generalized form the conditions of her daily life. Her vision extends beyond eyesight.

Orestes and his Tutor live in a world hardly mental at all. They show consciousness only of ordered, reasonable, external phenomena. Their mental set is objective and "realistic." They see a world existing apart from themselves; they move in it and control it with a large degree of choice; they feel no inner check to action. Electra virtually negates any world outside herself. The physical earth she equates to nothingness (line 245). She renounces the attempt to affect the external world, except by her laments and language. She lives under compulsions and necessities. She feels acute inner conflict. Electra appears on stage as an emblem of sensibility itself, of the private psyche, suffering in its timeless, placeless zone.

Electra's first cry, inside the house, before we have even had a glimpse of her, conveys the disembodied sense of passion. The cry springs directly from the mind, overleaping the media of concreteness. Her *threnos* and the long *kommos* following give lyric voice to an essentially internal state. She constantly refers to her passions and her pain. She is *dustēnos* when she first enters our ken (lines 77 and 80). She exhibits every form of passionate intensity: despair, defiant rage, horror, physical pain, hatred, pity. She asserts that she cannot be satiated in these passions.<sup>40</sup>

Electra's stance in the play is stationary. We see her always before us,

as unmoving as the palace whose interior she represents. Her bravery manifests itself in part by a refusal to budge. She refuses to carry out what is commanded by enemies. She would accept imprisonment without complaint, she tells Chrysothemis. We can realize that confinement is not such a harsh fate, and certainly requires no radical alteration for Electra, because she is by nature steadfast. Yet, after Orestes comes, and after the Paedagogus' tongue-lashing, Electra steps into action, exits, and returns to take part in the maneuvers occupying the end of the drama.

At the outset, Electra must be reminded of where she is and of the dangers implied by physical location.<sup>41</sup> The transformation of her sense of space comes later in the play mainly through a new awareness of location. For she remains an embodiment of passion and sensibility to the very end; but along with her commencement of physical movement, she expresses her first acuity about the precisions of place. When she re-enters from the palace, she describes the events in progress to the Chorus in terms reflecting this acuity. She retains this new sense to the end.<sup>42</sup>

In fact, the action of the Exodos is mirrored by the language of exact place, culminating in the requirement that Aegisthus die on the spot where he killed Agamemnon.<sup>43</sup> All the speakers in the Exodos speak with precision about locale, and all emphasize eyesight.<sup>44</sup>

The mentality that the Paedagogus and Orestes share sees the world as an ordered collection of material objects subservient to the laws of time and space. In this material world they include their own bodies, as well as those of other people. Action, for them, means a manipulation of objects. When they "act" they move their hands or feet: the vengeance, the essential deed, will be an act of hand, as the Oracle advised (line 37). Throughout the play, we find that hands and feet serve as the dominant images for action. In other words, hands and feet become symbols for the body, and hence for bodily activity. For instance, Electra sees the coming of Orestes and his victory over enemies as his correlation of hand and foot (lines 455-56); and, in an elated figure of speech, she greets the Paedagogus as though he were merely a pair of hands and feet (lines 1357-58). Again and again, a more or less pleonastic reference to hands or feet appears in conjunction with a physical activity such as fighting, a physical activity performed by the men and not by Electra.<sup>45</sup>

Now both hand and foot work in one kind of activity emphasized to a remarkable extent in connection with the men: carrying. When the Paedagogus saved Orestes at the time of Agamemnon's murder, he "carried" him off: λαβών/ἤνεγκα (lines 12-13). Orestes plans for them to "carry" a false report into the palace (lines 56-57). His own hope is

to "carry off" glory (line 60); and so also the Paedagogus believes that they will win through to victory, *φέρειν/νίκην* (lines 84–85). The verb *pherein*, throughout the play, symbolizes the men's activity in space, and connotes, at once, physical concreteness, purposive activity, manipulation of objects, change of place, winning a tangible reward, and using things for oneself in the external world.

As if to emphasize how little Electra participates in this activity, each of her interlocutors comes in "carrying" something, literally or figuratively. Chrysothemis carries the burial offering.<sup>46</sup> We see Clytaemnestra's attendants with sacrificial offerings. The Paedagogus brings news: *σοὶ φέρων ἦκω λόγους* (line 666). He mentions that men at the race carried the ashes of Orestes (lines 758–59). Finally, Orestes carries the urn (line 1113), and calls his companions *prospherontes* (line 1123).

Carrying and all the other forms of extension in space produce a general emblem of the men's vision of the world: imagery of the horizontal. Electra's rejection of motion and extension in physical space, on the other hand, produces images of verticality. The dialectic of Orestes and Electra, we shall find, clothes itself in the spatial symbolism of horizontal and vertical. But we shall see that this symbolism also reflects the dialectic of *ergon* and *logos*, and coheres with the other meanings carried by the play's two heroes.

The opening words of the Paedagogus and his gestures of hand alike place us on a horizontal plane of imagery: geographical expanse, circumferential gaze, linear progression, physical extension, and the straight arrow of time. When the men move off the stage, their exit in opposite directions draws out before us a line from *parodos* to *parodos*. Then we see the figure of Electra executing movements in a contrasting dimension: her first gesture on entering is to raise her arms to the sun, then extend them lowered to the earth. Her words parallel this vertical path from sun to earth through the middle sphere of air (lines 86–87).

Electra proves closely bound up with the earth and subterranean region to the virtual rejection of the ethereal and heavenly. Her gaze soon becomes fixed on the ground, as she addresses the spirit of Agamemnon dwelling below, and as she prays to the underworld divinities (Hades and Persephone, *chthoni' Hermē, Ara*, and the Furies). Her *threnos* closes with a developed metaphor for the vertical axis on which she lives:

Alone I am no longer strong enough  
To bear up the load of grief that weighs on me.

(lines 119–20)



The scale tips down, in her misery, *achthos*, which is a weight on her body under which she can no longer hold up. The technical language of the balance<sup>47</sup> leaves us with a clear image for her depression; but also with the covert possibility of redress and ascension.

The dominant activity of the men, walking, implies horizontal motion. Locomotion is cited eleven times in the men's half of the Prologue.<sup>48</sup> In the opening scenes, each of the characters except Electra becomes associated with similar movement. For example, Chrysothemis refers to herself "sailing" through life (line 335) and Electra implies that her sister is on a journey (line 405). Another basic image of the horizontal is the sea. In the Paedagogus' *rhesis* the chariot-race, already, of course, movement on a plane and a visual rendering of the horizontal *par excellence*, is transformed metaphorically into a sea-battle.<sup>49</sup> So, again, all the literal and figurative "carrying" in the play produces an image of horizontal movement, and we have seen that this clusters around the men.

The play associates vertical imagery with whatever departs from the ordinary course of events in life, whatever marks triumph or catastrophe (as this word suggests), whatever transcends the strictly human or physical sphere. Along the vertical we feel an insistent tension between the spring upward and the pull downward. Electra's scenes move only in the vertical dimension, and her psychological state moves up and down according to the events at hand: her initial despondency finds images of the nether world and of weight; her hopes mount with the dream vision of the growing tree; she sinks lifeless to the ground after hearing of Orestes' death; his return provokes her to call on the sun.

Along the vertical, ascension implies triumph. Hence Orestes associates success in his endeavor with the vertical dimension on its upper reaches. The Paedagogus' first speech ended with the figurative *akmē*, the crest of opportunity. Orestes uses the rhetorical image of the blazing star for an emblem of his victory over enemies (line 61), and his final personification of *kairos* as *ergou . . . epistatēs* implies guidance from above, from the overseer, the man on top.

Thus there is symbolic import in Orestes' fiction of death by a fall (lines 49-50). And when the Paedagogus constructs his *mythos*, he dwells on this plunge from glory to disaster, and marks the vertical symbolism in a way which can hardly fail to affect us. Until the fatal moment in the race, Orestes had been "upright," *orthos*, a word the Paedagogus insists on, *δρόμους/ὀρθοῦθ' ὁ τλήμων ὀρθὸς ἐξ ὀρθῶν δίφρων* (line 742). But in the disaster he passes from upright and safe to fallen and mutilated: "he fell from the rails of the chariot and was tangled in the

reins" (lines 746-47). In disaster, Orestes becomes simply "the fallen" (lines 747 and 749). He is dragged along the ground, but he is upside down, and his legs point to heaven (lines 752-53).

We have been prepared for the impact of this fall by another, cited by the Chorus, in the Epode to the first Stasimon. The stanza seems irrelevant or superfluous until we grasp the symbolism of the vertical. After referring to the fatal horsemanship of Pelops, the Chorus locate the origin of the woes of his House in his shameful treatment of Myrtilos, whom he threw from a chariot and drowned in the sea (lines 508-10 and 512). But the Chorus express the hope that the House of Pelops will again rise from the depths of grief and ruin.

As a final example of this symbolism of horizontal and vertical, I shall show some of its effects in the second Stasimon. Each of the three Stasima builds on similar imagery, and in each the Chorus locate in the events of the drama a movement forward which will carry in ultimate victory. The second Stasimon, the longest and most highly elaborated in the play, sums up, in effect, those central scenes devoted to Electra and her world, and not only sings her praises but offers a full emblem of what she represents by assimilating everything that has gone before to the vertical dimension. But, at the same time, we shall find Electra joined to the forward thrust, ready to step toward Orestes in the Episode following, to which the ode serves as dramatic transition.

The first Strophe of the ode vividly outlines a shaft dropping sheer from the upper air to the nether regions. We pass from the sensible storks overhead, Zeus, and heavenly Themis, down into the earth where Agamemnon resides joylessly. Our position at each stage of this descent is etched on the shaft. The birds are "above" (line 1058) and we look up to "see" them (line 1059). The dead are "those below" (line 1068), and a voice is to "shout down" to them (line 1067). The *ouranian Themis* (line 1064) balances the *chthonia phama* (line 1066). Then, too, the drift of the verses is that we should learn from what is above, embodying principles of right; that what is done on earth should reflect what is done up above; and that report of what is done on earth should reach those below, so as to call up the nether spirits as allies against injustice. Just as the lightning of Zeus (line 1063) strikes earthly criminals, so the voice of Fama (line 1066) carries word of crime to those in Hades. Finally, these verse implicitly praise Electra and criticize Chrysothemis; for Electra, like the stork, is mindful of her progenitor, and is being wronged along with him. In addition to this moral resemblance, Electra is associated with the birds in this Strophe through her linkage with the nightingale in the first Antistrophe.<sup>50</sup>

The first Antistrophe and the second Strophe refer to the scene of dispute between the two sisters which we have just witnessed, and praise Electra's character and virtue in terms of her isolation, constant lament, willingness to die, and filial devotion. She and Chrysothemis are divided in strife: two striking metaphors of warfare occur (lines 1072 and 1087). Electra is tossed like a ship (line 1074). But she will carry off the reputation of being the best of daughters (lines 1088-89). So that these two stanzas in the middle of the ode express Electra's resistance to evil and her decision to suffer and act in predominantly horizontal imagery. Her fixed stance has turned into significant action; and for the first time she will engage in the activity denoted by the verb *pherein* (lines 1088 and 1096). But, even here, *pherein* means more "winning" than "carrying," and involves repute rather than material gain.

The closing Antistrophe parallels the opening Strophe in its vertical imagery. It begins,

May you live as much on top  
Of enemies in strength and wealth  
As now you lie under their hand. . . (lines 1090-92)

Victory over enemies is associated with wealth and the "upper hand," as elsewhere; Electra's present state puts her under her enemies' thumb. But whereas the beginning of the ode moved down, the close moves up. The final lines expand the wish for ascent and triumph; Electra's misfortune now may find recompense later because of her reverence toward the highest *nomina*, those of Zeus. The first and last lines of this Stasimon each contain superlatives; and by the close of the ode, superlatives have linked Electra to the heavenly powers.<sup>51</sup>

Vertical imagery in the play suggests whatever transcends the strictly human sphere, and along the vertical we feel a tension between two great orders of divinity, the upper and the lower. For Electra's divinities are primarily chthonic and infernal, while Orestes' are all above ground, as we realize from their separate prayers in the Prologue.

Now Orestes shows signal affinity with Apollo, the god of light.<sup>52</sup> He comes as "purifier" of his House (line 70), roused by the Oracle of Delphi. He and the Paedagogus show constant attention to the god's commands (lines 38, 51, 82-4). The association of Orestes and Apollo makes it appropriate for his supposed death to occur at the Pythian games.<sup>53</sup>

Electra, in the Prologue, includes the holy sun in her first gesture, but immediately becomes immersed in the lower realm, comprising the dead and the nether gods. Nonetheless, Electra's spiritual affinities

extend along the entire vertical axis. Indeed, the course of her experience in the play shows an eventual movement upward, which adds the Olympians to the inhabitants of Hades. In the Parodos, she refers to Zeus twice (lines 148 and 209), locating him high on Mount Olympos. But, as the play progresses, other people, not Electra, invoke, or testify to, the active power of Apollo. Only when Orestes has appeared, raising Electra as if from the dead, does she turn toward Apollo: first, in joy she exclaims *ō philtaton phōs* (lines 1224 and 1354); she hints recognition of him with such ambiguous terms as *daimonion* and *theos*; then, finally, when, but only when, her partnership with Orestes has been ratified, she makes an outright prayer to Apollo, the overseer of the vengeance (lines 1376ff).

If my discussion of the gods' part in symbolism of the vertical be accepted, then they are another example of how the world order has been built into the *Electra*, and how the characters point beyond themselves to the cosmos. It is worth thinking about the view of H. D. F. Kitto on this matter. He considers the play a picture of double causation, human and divine.<sup>54</sup> The fact that Orestes has come, he argues, confirms the potency of the nether gods to whom Electra prays in her monody, and confirms as well the supervision of Zeus, in whom the Chorus trust. The final accomplishment of vengeance shows the presence of Furies and of Apollo. There seems to me much truth in this position. But has not Kitto overlooked the way in which deities enter the play only in association with specific characters? Orestes not only cites his Apollonian marching orders, but in a sense brings the god on stage, because he is *like* Apollo: detached, confident, remorseless, rational, lucid. And Electra, as Clytaemnestra remarks from close acquaintance, is *like* a Fury.<sup>55</sup>

We feel divinity at work through the characters, and only through the characters. But god and human are not thereby identical.<sup>56</sup> Orestes and Apollo are no more merged than Orestes and *ergon*; and no less. In both cases, Orestes reflects cosmic circumstance to the extent that, where he moves, there it becomes visible. He represents the Apollonian side of reality.

In showing the coordination of Orestes and Electra, the end of the play shows a coordination of the higher and lower deities. At the same time, as we saw above, the whole divine order receives expression in the character of Electra. Just as within her mentality, so through the drama as a whole, the dialectic of divinity moves from an initial separation of higher and lower to their union. Therefore, I believe, the final point reached by the play implies a sense of unified divine force transcending



the particular deities. The partial visions of divinity, which each of the characters expresses, give way to a universalized divine order, suggested toward the end of the play by such terms as *daimonion* (line 1269), *theos* (lines 1264, 1266, etc.), *daimōn* (lines 917, 1306), *nemesis* (lines 792, 1467), and, pre-eminently, *Dike*.

Divine powers and human agents are coordinated throughout the *Electra*. Twice in prayer Electra puts yearning for aid from the underworld beside yearning for her brother (lines 115-17 and 453-56). For her, also, Orestes and her "father lying in Hades" have equal reality (lines 461-63). The Chorus pair Orestes and Hades (lines 180-84), and locate the source of the family's ills in "either a god or a mortal" (lines 199-200). In the Strophe of the final Stasimon, they see the men entering the palace as Ares and the Furies. Just as it correlates organic character and cosmic principles, so the play maintains a delicate balance between the association of gods and men and their separate autonomy. In a word, Electra and Orestes are the essential *symbols* in the play for divine forces as well as cosmic principles: they constantly suggest the reality of an objective world order while remaining plausible human agents.

Through the emblematic figures of Electra and Orestes we can glimpse the outlines of the Sophoclean universe. We saw in the previous part of this study how they participate in a dialectical drama as *logos* and *ergon* respectively. Orestes uses *logoi*, of course, but only as they mirror, prepare for, or effect external *erga*. Therefore his *logoi* reveal little about his inner life; that little shows his mind to be, in fact, only a reflection of ordered, reasonable, physical reality. Precisely because of this, however, his opening *logos* can outline for us the framing, external plot of the play. Now Electra's *logoi* are windows for us onto a different dramatic landscape. Through them we perceive the internal and moral character of the action. The bulk of the play depicts *kaka*: *hybris*, *phobos*, *atē*, *pathos*, *phonos*. We appreciate these only through Electra's sensibility, and only by virtue of what she says. Her *logoi* spring from the *kaka* which she witnesses and to which she reacts in kind. This is the ground of the linkage made by the play between *logos* and passion. We, as audience, are involved in the full meaning of *erga* only through the words of Electra, which are the necessary medium of her passionate experience. Thus, speech, and Electra, convey the inner world of emotion, by contrast to motion or extension in space.

Electra's form of *logos* violates the laws of "reason," in the sense of a prudent observance of external circumstances. This prudence is associated with *to phronein* and *nous*. Orestes shows that these ordinary rational functions of mind are directed toward action. Accordingly,

Electra asserts her own lack of *to phronein* and *nous*.<sup>57</sup> She is willing to be considered insane.<sup>58</sup> But we are able to see now that Electra's *logos* implies "reason" in a more than worldly sense. It is the truth of the passions; it apprehends the inner meaning of events. And our discussion above has implied that *logos* signifies timelessness. The world of Electra, and of *logos*, is a world of timeless passion, with affinities to the gods and spirits. For, by the end of the play, as we have just seen, Electra suggests at once the souls in Hades, the nether deities, and the Olympians. This linkage of deity and passion recalls Homer.<sup>59</sup> But the linkage of deity, passion, perpetuity, and *logos* carries us far into a uniquely Sophoclean world order.

The symbolism of horizontal and vertical implies that *ergon*, in the play, represents everything immanent, everything confined to the world of the senses; while *logos* pulls us into an eternal world intersecting the immanent. Now the association of *logos* and the vertical dimension contains an echo of Heraclitus. For he wrote, "You could not find the ends of the *psyche* though you traveled every way, so deep is its *logos*," οὐτω βαθὺν λόγον ἔχει (frg. B45, Diels). Bruno Snell has contrasted this use of the prefix *bathu-* with the common Homeric prefix *polu-*.<sup>60</sup> We have already seen that Orestes and the men live in a quantitative sphere; the last word Orestes utters in the play is *polu* (line 1507). Electra's sphere is the qualitative. Thus, we may conclude, our play's association of the qualitative and vertically profound with *logos* has affinity to the Heraclitean attempt to find a reason in things beyond enumeration, chronology, and matter of fact.

By this route we may advance further into the meaning of *logos* and *ergon*. Orestes lives in a universe whose laws are those of matter. Electra would violate these laws for the sake of an inner universe. But her inner world is inseparable from her blood stream. She lives with her heredity, with her dead progenitor, with her chthonic and passionate attachments. Organic life is Electra's sphere, and she maintains contact with *psyche* in this sense.<sup>61</sup> Her language reflects this contact with the organic, not only explicitly as already mentioned, but by the constant sounding of verbs such as *phuein* and *blastanein*. So also other characters, especially the Chorus, associate such terms with her.<sup>62</sup> For example, in this interchange:

Xo. μὴ τίκτειν σ' ἄταν ἄταις.  
 Ηλ. καὶ τί μέτρον κακότητος ἔφν; φέρε,  
 πῶς ἐπὶ τοῖς φθιμένοις ἀμελεῖν καλόν;  
 ἐν τίνι τοῦτ' ἐβλαστ' ἀνθρώπων;

(lines 235-38)

The passage effects a number of remarkable connections. Passing over the rather grim irony in the Chorus' warning to Electra not to "give birth,"<sup>83</sup> we see that not only is ruin or destruction presented in metaphors of birth, but that the moral principles on which Electra calls are invested with an organic quality by the figurative verbs *ἐφν* and *ἐβλαστε*. Electra associates moral understanding, beyond the rigid and reasonable principle of "measure," with a principle or force of natural growth and emergence. She stresses that the dead participate in the same organic process, by calling them *τοῖς φθιμένοις*. Duty to the dead is thus part of our flesh and blood.

This sense of organic process, as contrasted to the inorganic change and physical movement of the men, informs much of Electra's language. She sees evils "blooming, rather than dying out" (line 260); while her hopes "perish" (line 306). Electra's father is an oak tree to her (line 98). Out of his scepter will grow a tree, as the dream announces: *βλαστεῖν βρύνοντα θαλλόν* (line 422), suggesting not only a vertical image for hope of ultimate victory, but the natural origin and progress of justice. The metaphor of birth or growth receives its fullest development in the long second Stasimon, the ode devoted to praise of Electra and to a summation of the vertical dimension. A key *motif* of that ode is *blastanein*. It is applied first to the wise, domestic, faithful storks (line 1060); then to Electra herself, the exemplar of filial constancy,

*τίς ἂν εὐπατρὺς ὧδε βλάστοι;* (line 1081)

Finally the image is used of the *megista nomima* related to Zeus (lines 1095-96). These connections signal that the great principles of the moral order are inseparable from organic nature; and that the natural order and moral order are together represented by Electra.

The term used by and about Electra which points to this quality of her world as well as of her own nature is *physis*. After deciding to act, she says that her *physis* has remained constant, but her *nous* has increased (line 1023). She ends her speech to Clytaemnestra with the word *physis* (line 609); and Orestes applies it to her, his last word before her lament over the urn (line 1125). Electra embodies what we might call the law of nature. While Orestes hustles in and out, she remains stationary throughout the play because she is rooted in the permanent inner rhythm of organic process.

In this way we see how much Sophocles meant to assert by presenting the union of the higher and nether regions in Electra: passion, affinity with the dead, and chthonic immersion in ties of blood are united to the highest laws of Olympian religion, and express the timelessness of

divinity. The organic and divine stand together, over against the inorganic and wholly immanent. And *logos* becomes the root principle both of organic nature and of transcendence.<sup>64</sup> It is *physis* which effects this bond; for *physis* implies at once the passionate internal nature of the *psyche*, communicated by speech alone, and a world order, divine, enduring, lawful, accessible only to reason going deeper than intellect.

If *logos* is the vital, internal principle of the Sophoclean universe, then *ergon* must be called its necessary outer framework, its external shape. *Physis* loves to hide, as Heraclitus said; but matter appears on the surface. And, in fact, there are grounds within the *Electra* for defining *ergon* as *real appearance*, by contrast to the invisible force of *logos*. For *ergon* and Orestes are associated with *phainein*, especially when intransitive or passive, meaning "appear," "come to light," "become visible." Electra complains that Orestes does not deign to appear, *phanēnai* (line 172). And, after he has finally come, she uses the same term to speak of his arrival: *pephēnotos* (line 1261), *phanēnai* (line 1274), *prouphanēs* (line 1285).<sup>65</sup> Also the concepts of *sēmainein* and *saphes*, which occur so often, similarly imply observable appearance, visibility. Thus, *ergon* refers to the evidence of the senses and, at the same time, to the shell of the universe, that material world in which action takes place.

Orestes, the Paedagogus, and the consistently mute Pylades, live in a world of light; and Apollo is their god. At the god's suggestion as well as on their own initiative, they appear in Electra's dark world, and transform it in an instant to a triumphant brightness. The cosmic drama of *Electra*, like that of its heroine, shows *logos* struggling to reconcile itself, without compromise, to *ergon*. The dialectic of the two forces issues in the manifestation in the world of *logos*: passion, divinity, natural law. Without *ergon* there could be no such manifestation. Without *logos* events would be meaningless.

## II

Is the *Electra* affirmative or negative? Are Orestes and Electra, and their act of vengeance, elevated morally or condemned by Sophocles? These questions pose the substantive problem that critics have most often tried to solve. Let us try in our turn. I believe that the preceding study not only argues indirectly for an affirmative *Electra* — since such a view of the play has cohered with various observations about theme, image, and structure — but also provides an approach to character which may be extended to plot, and which will meet the moral issue more directly. What are the characters, after all, and what are the events



in which they take part? It has already been shown that the characters are more than individual persons. Before our eyes they have become massive, since we can understand them only as the medium through which universal principles and divine energies appear in the play. We cannot reduce them to the scale of normal emotion or motive, though the figure of our heroine, especially, shows sufficient psychological detail to stand out as vital, vivid, organic. But I maintain that what should compel our awe and fullest attention as we watch this drama is not so much these psychological traits as the cosmic order revealed behind them. The characters were not constructed to show the Athenians solely how people behave but how the world as a whole operates. Even the organic detail seen in the character of Electra serves to bring out her connection with cosmic realities such as *physis*.

Sophocles set himself the task of dramatizing the cosmos, including its human portion, through the medium of plausible human agents and possible events in life. Therefore, we cannot judge his heroes by first stripping away their masks and cosmic implications. But this, in my opinion, is what those critics who find the play a study of darkness and corruption have done.<sup>66</sup> Symbolic drama leaves them unmoved, and they respond to its characters in moral immediacy as they would to an individual in everyday life.

Is it "right" for Oedipus to curse his son and effectively condemn him to death? Is it "right" for a young woman to die instead of marrying, for the sake of a makeshift burial? Sophocles seems to ask us to consider actions from the perspective of a higher law than ordinary motives exhibit. We must, in fact, consider actions as part of a higher order pervading them, and not solely in terms of the agent's motive. This higher law and order, not "human nature" alone, shapes his plays; and his heroes, in obeying it, pass somewhat beyond human finitude. So we too must rise above our usual point of view as we participate in a Sophoclean tragedy and must open ourselves to a larger drama and larger conception of justice. If we do so, I believe that we shall find Electra and Orestes justified, in actions showing universal justice at work, that is, cosmic circumstance arranging itself beneficially.

Murder and matricide, hating daughter and relentless son, catastrophe and peripety: judged by the standards of probability, normal psychology, and moral immediacy, perhaps the play affects us as implausible, inhuman, or "ugly."<sup>67</sup> But responding to its cosmic drama we shall witness in the *Electra* a new definition of good and evil, when a more than human reality, active through humans, achieves justice. An idealized hero and heroine punish a pair of stylized villains: the revenge

story does not preach vendetta, but symbolizes harsh, beneficent forces in the nature of things. The *Electra* should be seen as a pageant of human suffering, conflict, and resolution pointing to an objective universal order. Some will find this order as repellent as incest, suicide, or self-mutilation. Others, however, will see in it a pattern and profundity that render it not only bearable but lovely. They will see Sophocles' proud acceptance of tension, pain, and death in the advance of justice.

We must now consider the plot of the *Electra* in order to support the claim that it manifests cosmic principles, and world order and law.

Though it grows out of dualities of character, the plot of the *Electra* shows unity of direction and may be viewed from above as progress in a straight line. From this perspective, surging retribution drives the play forward. The opening lines announce the intended act of vengeance, and no ensuing scene fails to add motive, sanction, and impetus to this act. Scene by scene, we move along a judicial and moral path leading to punishment of the guilty. Electra, seconded by the Chorus, reflects and recounts the crimes of Clytaemnestra and Aegisthus. From a dream, divine omen of a happy outcome, we return to the hard case at hand, as Clytaemnestra condemns herself to death in a law-court debate. Electra receives a necessary push forward, as if the supposed death of Orestes itself called out for blood. Only when the deed is afoot can the tension begin to abate. Only with the assured downfall of Aegisthus can a sense of consummation replace one of suspense. Yet so it does, and the final words of the play leave us with "freedom" and the "perfected" House of Atreus.

Such is the plot of the *Electra*. Its amazing dramatic continuity carries us along, swept up in a process outside our control. We watch the spectacle advance toward an appointed end. During the swift passage of this drama, we lack occasion to question where right and wrong lie, for they are our *données*: Orestes and Electra promote justice, Aegisthus and Clytaemnestra are criminals. The issues turn not on where justice resides but on how it manifests itself.

At the beginning of the action the moral order has been jeopardized by crimes that deprive a son of his patrimony, leave a father in his tomb unavenged, enslave a daughter, and subject the *polis* to the tyranny of usurping adulterers. The plot then holds back justice until its necessity and validity have been proven emotionally. Yet the course of retributive justice runs smooth, gathering to itself ritual observances, prayers, and omens. This force that rights the moral order receives many names in the play, but primarily that of *Dike*.<sup>68</sup>

But the progress of justice rights the world order as well as the moral

order. The beginning of the play shows words floating disconnected from deeds, thoughts from facts, time from eternity. A whole, harmonious universe, bounded by the dimensions of vertical and horizontal, has been split into passion and place, essence and existence. Man and woman are unnaturally separated. Justice demands the reunion of Orestes and Electra. Punishment of the guilty couple demands an avenging just couple. In the same way, each of the cosmic dualities previously discussed advances with retribution toward triumphant symmetry. The progress of dialectic matches the progress of justice.

By the end of the play, some force creates at least temporary equilibrium in the world order as in the moral order. The earliest Greek thinkers have spoken to us, through interpreters such as Cornford, Dodds, and Jaeger, of such an agency, and have used the name used in our play, *Dike*.<sup>69</sup> Primordial *Dike* works amidst contraries; it resolves the counterclaim of opposite extremes. The path of Justice, the strait and narrow, issues only from fierce pressures on both sides. Such *Dike*, like its relative *Nemesis*, pays back excess with excess to arrive at harmony. Its law is that of retribution: tit-for-tat, until a just tension emerges.<sup>70</sup> Retribution, and *Dike*, both imply a give and take, a force and counter-force, a dynamic process involving antitheses. We conclude that *Dike* is intrinsically dialectical: it violently forces antitheses into correlation.

Because *Dike* works dialectically, the plot of the *Electra* is by no means simply linear, as we have viewed it so far. Certainly we can describe the irresistible progress of justice, whether moral or cosmic, as a straight line from beginning to end; but we should now see that the actual shape of that progress consists not only of fits and starts, not only of contraries and dilemmas, but of massive reversals. For the dramatic structure of the *Electra* contains a remarkable peculiarity: there are four *coups de théâtre*, four radical alterations in atmosphere and dramatic circumstance, any one of which would have sufficed for a tragedy. First, in the Prologue scene, the impact of Electra's monody shatters the tone and assumptions of the men. Second, the false report wipes out Electra's hopeful expectations and overthrows her world. But the Paedagogus' entrance also reverses our expectations, formed when the lie was planned in the Prologue; for we could not then imagine the extent of our sympathy for Electra, nor the disaster that the report would bring on her. Third, the discovery by Electra of Orestes, alive and safe, turns the intense despair of her lament to joy. Fourth, Aegisthus' downfall, from new power and security to doom, comes with his enforced discovery that Clytaemnestra, not Orestes, is dead.<sup>71</sup>



These four "reversals" dramatize through the immediate impact of plot the dialectical force of *Dike*. Each of these scenes of radical alternation occurs at a point where one cosmic principle encounters another. The first three, where the two fundamental spheres represented by men and women impinge on one another. The fourth, where the avenging couple complete their overthrow of the criminal couple. Each of these reversals dramatizes a violent, necessary upheaval in the process leading to just harmony: the initial rending of the social, moral, and world orders; collision of the two separated orders; reunion; overthrow by the just of an unjust residue. *Dike*, virtually a cosmic causal power,<sup>72</sup> drives the play forward in its dialectical design.

We have already considered a number of cosmic principles that present themselves in the course of the *Electra*. Each has its roots in human experience but relevance for the world as a whole. They are thus "universals" in a strict sense. In the remaining pages of this essay, I wish to show how yet another dialectic fundamental to human experience provides a cosmic plot in the *Electra*: life and death. Critics have noticed the recurrence of this *motif*, but, I believe it is fair to say, have treated it in isolation from other major themes and from structure.<sup>73</sup>

Domestic murder (not matricide alone) lies near the heart of the myth used by our play. The criminals have committed murder, and the punishment requires the same. The outer plot or external action, the men's plot, carries vengeance from strategy in the Prologue to slaughter in the Exodos. The middle of this plot also involves death, that of Orestes. The traditional myth of Orestes, in fact, meant the pattern of presumed death and eventual rebirth.<sup>74</sup> What of the inner plot, Electra's experience? This too dramatizes murder and death. With the difference that Electra, as we shall see, exhibits the effects of murder and of death at work within her passionate sensibility.

Each of the four great reversals in the play pivots on a transition between life and death. In the Prologue, it is the vitality and light of the assured avengers contrasted to the dark of an afflicted victim. The Paedagogus' tale destroys Electra's life, while preparing for the murder of Clytaemnestra; the death of Orestes, in other words, by the law of like effects, produces his sister's emotional death on stage. Then his return, in the same way, causes her return to life. Finally, Aegisthus' plunge into his executioners' trap accompanies, most justly, the reversal in his view of who is dead and who is alive.

When Orestes and the Paedagogus enter, they put before our eyes an Apollonian force ready to scatter death from a distance on the guilty. No ambiguity lingers about the justice of their endeavor; rather, we sit



fascinated by the bright, lucid, remorseless mechanism at work in the men's logic of time, place, means, and end. Yet the men's absence of sensibility reduces the whole matter of life and death to intrigue and adventure. In this spirit Orestes produces his stratagem of feigned death. "What pain will it cause me if I die in sham but in reality come through alive to win glory?" (lines 59–60). Death lacks harsh immediacy for him, and pretended death is a light matter indeed. He remarks on other *sophoi* who have won fame through seeming death (line 62).<sup>75</sup> The trick delights him in its cleverness. Orestes' detachment becomes all the more striking when we realize that his past has been a tangle of life and death. He was born in a "death-heavy House," in danger at the time of his father's murder, saved then in order to revenge his father now.<sup>76</sup> His whole life, as the Paedagogus presents it to us, has prepared him only for slaughter. The chain of murder requiring murder was his inheritance; he converts it to a brilliant paradox in the plan to sham death.<sup>77</sup>

To Orestes, killing the murderers of his father appears a natural enough *jeu de main*; and his own death seems no more than a *jeu d'esprit*. He comes bent on murder for the sake of a better life. But just as his world of *ergon* excludes emotional life, so his perception of vengeance remains detached, and he sees death as something that only happens to other people. Life and death are physical states, and so the line between them is sharp and absolute. For Electra the line between life and death has blurred into nightmarish shadow. She hovers near the grave. Her life nears the point of dissolution.<sup>78</sup> Whatever portion of her vitality still remains yields to the magnetic attraction exercised by the nether world. The dead wake, watch, and claim her allegiance. She reveres only the dead and the absent — her father and her brother — and lives only to struggle against those at hand. Murder and death have absorbed her into a passionate continuum of pain, grief, pity, hatred, lament, obsession. Her life is a form of living death.

Again and again, Electra speaks as though she were dying, perishing, or being destroyed: ἡ τάλαιν' ἀπόλλυμι (line 304). The Chorus speaks of her in the same way: διόλλυσαι (line 141). Her life has been betrayed and surrendered; and those who killed her father are killing her.

Ηλ. αἶ τὸν ἐμὸν εἶλον βίον  
 πρόδοτον, αἶ μ' ἀπώλεσαν. (lines 207–8)

She cannot go on; her life seems already over.<sup>79</sup> Unmarried, childless, unloved, she has been destroyed as a woman.<sup>80</sup> She lives face to face with death: the constant memory of an unrequited father and daily

contact with his murderers.<sup>81</sup> Her ethic and her theology, in fact, require incessant re-enactment in memory of Agamemnon's death in every detail.<sup>82</sup> For this is her occupation of lament. She defines her life by its proximity to death and vows to endure such a life as long as possible.<sup>83</sup>

*Dike* manifests itself in Electra in tragic paradoxes reversing those of Orestes' irony. Electra advances vengeance dramatically by proclaiming, proving, its necessity for her own preservation; she advances it morally by joining in the cause of the living dead. Electra does more, however, than force on us the guilt of Agamemnon's two murderers, more than serve her father's cause. She brings into the theater a victim of murder, a dying soul. Her encroaching death itself cries out for vengeance, with utmost directness both dramatic and moral. Electra's own destruction calls out the reflex force of *Dike*.

In Electra's monody, and in the Parodos, the timelessness of lyrics and lament projects a dramatic image of death-like fixity. But through her first set-speech, and then the scenes with Chrysothemis and Clytaemnestra, Electra gradually mounts in vitality. Her rising hopes and defiant strength thus parallel the progress of the outer plot of revenge. But we see also that Electra effects daily a measure of revenge at home. Her life, as she says to her sister, may be wretched, may approach death, but at least she pains others, and thereby pleases her father.<sup>84</sup> She provides a daily trial for Clytaemnestra; in a typical debate, we see her wound her mother. Yet even though these scenes show her using what strength she retains, each of them dwells on the *motif* of death, especially her own proximity to death. She shocks Chrysothemis by her willingness to die (lines 392-93). Indeed, she can nonchalantly accept Aegisthus' threat of burial alive, since it so closely resembles her present mode of life. She answers the hopeful omen in Clytaemnestra's dream of light and growth with a renewed exhortation to enlist the forces of darkness and death.

Life seems hardly worth living to Electra.<sup>85</sup> The failure of Orestes to appear is close to annihilating her.<sup>86</sup> Now when the Paedagogus announces that Orestes is dead, the report operates, inevitably, to kill her. She drops from the gradual ascent of hopeful defiance to the depths of despair. The Paedagogus' *rhexis* leaves her with no support. Her attitudes, as a result, collapse; she changes, as we have seen, in regard to time, place, and action. Her mood and mentality turn around toward eventual salvation, through the tragic process of purgatorial suffering.

Orestes' fictitious death inflicts a dramatically literal death on Electra. When the Paedagogus pronounces the words, *τέθνηκε Ὀρέστης* (line

673), Electra instantly takes the death to herself, and responds, without reference to her brother, οἷ 'γὰ τάλαινα', ὄλωλα (line 674). When, at the bidding of Clytaemnestra, the Paedagogus repeats that Orestes is dead, Electra responds again,

ἀπωλόμην δύστηνος, οὐδέν εἰμ' ἔτι. (line 677)

Her appearance in the theater, we may imagine, supports the literal sense of these words. Throughout the Paedagogus' long and exciting story, she huddles nerveless, frozen, head hidden from sight, crumpled in the lifeless attitude of complete depression. For this long interval we take in the fact of her death.

Electra's life, her residual affirmation and hope, depended in part on Orestes' life, the promise of his arrival as the hand of vengeance. Orestes' death destroyed her hopes.<sup>87</sup> Electra, in other words, lived only in relation to Orestes, sustained by his vitality. His death, then, causes hers.

Ηλ. ὦ τάλαινα' ἐγώ.  
'Ορέστα φίλταθ', ὥς μ' ἀπώλεσας θανών.  
(lines 807-8)

Immediately after hearing the report, she no longer finds life worth living. "Here, unloved, I will abandon myself to waste away this life of mine . . . Let someone kill me . . . Death would be a favor, life is only pain. I have no desire for life" (lines 818-22). She acquiesces passively, without as much as verbal resistance, not seeking even death actively.

The scene with the Paedagogus and the ensuing *kommos* form the low point of Electra's experience. And, as the *kommos* shows, she now dwells at the bottom of the vertical scale. The ode descends to Hades, as the second Stasimon will later, but does not rise again. Electra rejects even the ordinary belief in life below (lines 837-41). Death is now absolute. She sees continuously the terrible details of Orestes' accident and burial in exile. The physicality of these details renders meaningless in advance any consolation other than the physical return of Orestes.

Electra had lived by *logos*, and *logos* (speech, fiction, oratory, false seeming, hearsay) kills her. Rather, we should say that the false *logos* begins to destroy the false *logos* in Electra. As we have seen, *logos* is double: valid and spurious, profound and superficial, divine and all too human. The transformation of Electra — as agent and as symbol — requires that she pass from one life to another through death. This pattern of death preparing the hero for eventual triumph was early proclaimed in Odysseus' descent to Hades. But here it joins the mechanism of retributive justice.<sup>88</sup> Electra's living death, maintained by *logos*

and passion, calls out *Nemesis*: the concrete details of physical death, evoked, however, by a coldly contrived, brilliant speech. So the recoil of excess operates.

The Paedagogus' *rhesis* occurs in the dead-center of the play, and it is probably more important to understand this dramatic moment than any other. Electra's death claims our fullest attention.<sup>89</sup> But the silent, frozen figure of Electra cannot produce all the impact of the scene. Nor is the scene wholly dark. The *rhesis* recalls us to a world of flashing movement, just as it pulls us up, out of Electra's inner debates, back into the scheme afoot. We cannot forget that the old man lies. The effects of his story on Electra are complicated for us by this fact. Orestes remains alive, while Electra dies. As we listen to the speech, we experience perhaps the most complete upheaval ever produced in a theater. We seem to see the death of Orestes, while knowing he lives; we see the anguish of Electra, while knowing she errs. Electra's anguish seems unnecessary, yet we realize its utter necessity. Finally, we discover that Orestes' clever scheme no longer means what it did in the Prologue. Now it affects us intimately; we appreciate murder from the inside. The lie has been transformed from a *jeu d'esprit* to a *coup de théâtre*.

The ensuing, second colloquy between the sisters proceeds more directly than critics have supposed out of the complex impact of the scene of the *mythos*. Electra does not return to life along with her determination to act; rather, she decides to die nobly. She remains close to the point of death until Orestes reveals himself, as her lament over his urn shows us. But the scene with Chrysothemis at least proves that Electra's view of the relations of life and death has progressed; she sees that justice demands the risk of death for the sake of a redeemed life. She thus conceives the scheme of murdering to secure a better life in terms quite similar to Orestes' in the Prologue.<sup>90</sup> Electra, however, alters only in thought and intention, not in action or achievement. And she does not emerge from darkness and an obsession with death until Orestes appears.

The tomb of Agamemnon, with its surrounding array of offerings to the dead, hovers in the background of the first half of the discussion between the sisters, in the same way that the image of the violent chariot-race and the violent death of Orestes colored the preceding scene. But just as active violence gives way to mourning the departed, so the credible fiction of the Paedagogus gives way to Electra's fallacies and fantasies. For not only does she reduce Chrysothemis to her own level of despondency in the first half of the scene, by convincing her on spurious grounds that the day has brought, not a reversal from sadness to joy,



but from hope to despair; but, in the second half of the scene, she turns the picture over again, and paints a fantasy of the happy life which they would share after putting things right in the household. Similarly, Electra has definite opinions when the issue is the life or death of Orestes, in the first half of the discussion, but passes lightly and vaguely over the necessity of killing Aegisthus, in the second half, and omits altogether the concomitant necessity of killing Clytaemnestra.

When Electra suggests that she has a plan for victory even without Orestes, Chrysothemis asks with grim mockery whether she can raise the dead; and Electra coldly rejects any such "foolish" notion.<sup>91</sup> Both sisters thus agree with the Chorus, who had reproved Electra for trying to "raise" her father out of Hades with prayers and groans.<sup>92</sup> But events prove it quite possible for the dead to return. And soon Electra will remark that even the return of Agamemnon would no longer surprise her.<sup>93</sup> The scene of Orestes' return, however, marks the necessity to accept death completely in order for rebirth to occur. The scene dramatizes this paradox, by placing life and death before our eyes during Electra's lament. Her shattering acceptance of death has the living presence of Orestes for a backdrop. This amazing dramatic moment combines acute pathos and stark irony.

Antitheses in Electra's lament evoke the contrast of a past hopeful life and present despair of life. The ebb and flow of the lament steadily increases this contrast. But, with Orestes behind her, and the urn in her hands, there is another contrast, visible in the theater, of past desolation and present redemption. Remarkably enough, the irony of this contrast re-enforces the pathos of the other. As Electra descends into the depths of mourning, the presence of Orestes intensifies the poignancy of her plight, for we see her hopes in their full strength, in the person of Orestes, and, at the same time, we share her sense of loss, caused by the urn. Finally the pathos and the tension become unbearable to Orestes as to us, and he breaks silence. But before that point has been reached, Electra has expressed, perhaps even more directly than after the *mythos*, her proximity to death. For the lament develops the *motifs* of *apollumi*, nothingness, and universal annihilation.<sup>94</sup> The individual death of Orestes merges with a world of ashes and shadows, the leavings of a whirlwind. "You have snatched everything in your departure, like a hurricane. Father is dead. I am dead in you. You are dead yourself" (lines 1150-53). "You have destroyed me, destroyed me, dear brother. Therefore, receive me to your dwelling, nothing to nothing, so that I may live with you below . . . I desire to share your grave by dying. The dead, I see, suffer no pain" (lines 1163-70).

The lament is a dirge on separation: the separation of brother and sister;<sup>95</sup> the banishment of Orestes from home and family;<sup>96</sup> the pathetic contrast of past and present. Cleavage implies death in the *Electra*, whether cleavage of *logos* and *ergon*, of time and eternity, or of Electra and Orestes. Yet the living presence of Orestes here asserts the reunion which brings life, and the impact of this scene of momentous reversal is therefore double from the outset. The contrast between Electra and Orestes is nowhere more signal than during her lament, as he stands silent. Out of this final dramatic antithesis, then, reversal brings a moment of pure joy, the only one in the play. We at last wholeheartedly join with Electra in her release from isolation and from the dilemmas of cleavage. With her we welcome Orestes, "dead in craft, and now by craft restored to life again" (lines 1228-29).<sup>97</sup>

The remainder of the play simply draws out the implications of this reversal from death to life, from despair to joy, from antithesis to coordination. Joined in aim, and carrying with them all that they represent, Electra and Orestes can fulfill the demands of *Dike*. All the events leading to their reunion have in fact made them the perfect embodiment of retribution. They have both died; and their double death can effect, by recoil, the deaths of Clytaemnestra and Aegisthus. Son and daughter can justly punish false mother and false father.

The moment of Clytaemnestra's death, breath-taking and climactic, comes across to us in the theater as just retribution, not only for the murder of Agamemnon, but for the death of Electra as well. Clytaemnestra's death-cry from inside the palace reminds us of the first cry of Electra in the Prologue; we shall hear no death-cry from Aegisthus. The moment of agony also resembles, dramatically, Electra's anguish at the Paedagogus' news. Not only the tension and shock, but, in a sense, the cause, are the same: for Orestes killed Electra, by dying, and now he kills Clytaemnestra. Throughout the play Electra's state of living death, and her suffering and slave's life, all serve to condemn Clytaemnestra and to cry out for vengeance. Thus, the *Electra* affords, in several ways, a more dramatically immediate justification for matricide than the murder of a father: the visible murder of the heroine. Sophoclean retribution repays self-evident crime.<sup>98</sup>

Orestes calls attention to the fact that Clytaemnestra dies to avenge, in part, Electra: immediately after re-entering he assures his sister that she need no longer fear her mother's abuse (lines 1426-27). Yet, also, Clytaemnestra dies with the death-cry of Agamemnon in the *Oresteia* on her lips. Orestes stands for his father, as always,<sup>99</sup> and embodies the

force of retribution left in the dead spirit. The dead live, as the Chorus remark.<sup>100</sup>

In a similar way, Aegisthus dies to pay for Agamemnon's death, but also as a recoil from the death of Orestes. Just as the scene of Clytaemnestra's death was *like* that of Electra's, so the scene in which Aegisthus falls reminds us, in its irony, of the feigned death of Orestes.<sup>101</sup> Detached and pitiless, Orestes politely toys with Aegisthus, cutting him with words while holding off the sword until the right spot has been reached. These moments have a tone of wit suggesting more a mock death than the real thing, even after Electra's exhortation to dispatch. The reversal in this scene, the final *coup de théâtre*, gratifies us intellectually, and is opposite in impact to the brief but sensational death of Clytaemnestra. Orestes stresses the reversal in Aegisthus' knowledge more than the reversal in his fate.<sup>102</sup> The displacement of Orestes' body by Clytaemnestra's is our final double turn of life and death. But here we relish the completion of a clever stratagem and the overthrow of an unqualified villain. We have no reservations; but our zest is sardonic and lacks joy. These last moments of the *Electra* convey the ironies of a bloody righting of the moral order by remorseless *Dike*.

The two killings complete first the inner plot, then the outer plot. Electra finds requital, and her passionate experience finds due issue, in the dramatically rending moment of matricide. We see only Electra at that moment; she cries, "Strike again," as if she controlled the sword. Orestes' triumph comes at the end; he dominates the closing minutes, as he did the first half of the Prologue, with his detached assurance. His last words proclaim the necessity of requital, the efficacy of capital punishment, and the justice of the laws. His scheme reaches its last step as he pushes Aegisthus across the threshold of the palace.

Throughout the plot of the *Electra* the characters must endure upheaval and ambiguity in their encounter with death. The dialectic of life and death, in fact, affects all the characters, and, in so doing, asserts its own autonomy through them. Electra and Orestes are purified by reversal and by living up to the violent demands of *Dike*. Clytaemnestra and Aegisthus are crushed by the same force because they oppose it. The play, therefore, defines justice in terms of a cosmic energy beyond individual or society; a hero is justified by his relationship to the world order rather than simply by his intrinsic merits. There is moral profundity in this vision of a dialectical pattern behind the major events of our history, and in the conception of human agents revealing a force beyond them. In modern terms, the morality is religious rather than humanistic; and its heroes seem not so much men as absolutes. To



Sophocles, however, modern conceptions of man, grounded in a separation of nature and divinity, ideal and real, would appear, I suspect, petty and one-sided; and modern conceptions of divinity would appear abstruse and bloodless. For him, human experience reflects universal truth, the universe pervades the individual, and man is internally and externally coordinated with deity. From this sense of ubiquitous analogy within an essential unity of things springs Sophocles' fundamental technique in the *Electra*: symbolism in character and event, universal reference in concrete language.

Sophocles saw the universe objectively as it presented itself in human experience. Sophoclean characters and Sophoclean universe alike exist in tension and move through cycles. Orestes and Electra both die and are reborn, like the yearly cycle of vegetation, or like the rotation of day and night.<sup>103</sup> Whirling around, *peripeteia*, shapes much of the imagery, as well as the larger structure, of the play. There is growth and decline, love and hate, rise and fall, joy and grief.<sup>104</sup> Each of these cyclic antitheses in the plot suggests cosmic alternation as well as human reversal. And each finally swings around to its affirmative pole. Such is the case too with regard to good and evil: their struggle is permanent, but at the end of the play one triumphs, the other perishes. The plot of the *Electra*, in other words, dramatizes a dialectical process leading to that just, glad state appearing momentarily at the high point of a cycle, the point suggested by the *akmē*, by the sun, and by rebirth.

The other group of antitheses in the Sophoclean universe, the complementary contraries, such as *logos* and *ergon*, eternity and time, passion and action, female and male, which cling to the characters, also reveal the analogy of human experience and a dialectical world order. They reach another kind of resolution in the course of the plot, however: taut equilibrium. Successful realization of one of the pair does not exclude, but necessitates, the realization of the other. Each of these pairs participates in victory, as *Dike* balances opposites in a moment of fulfillment. At this moment of fulfillment, there is no suggestion that the bloody achievement of Orestes and Electra leaves them with a penalty to pay. There is at most a hint, in the Sophoclean vision of cycle and dialectic, that permanent noon is impossible.

## NOTES

1. "Electra by Sophocles: the Dialectical Design," *HSCP* 68 (1964) 163-205.

2. "I make men (or, characters) as they should be." Quoted, Aristotle, *Poet.*

xxv 6. See S. H. Butcher, *Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art* ("Dover Publications" 1951) 370-71 and 370, n.3.



3. *Sophocles: Dramatist and Philosopher* (London 1958) 20.
4. Cf. David Grene, "Introduction to the *Electra*," in *Sophocles II* (Chicago 1957) 124: "I think we are meant to see Electra not as a real person in her own right but as a mass of responses to other persons and their deeds and words, whether true or false." However inadequate this remark may be to Electra's inner strengths and inner meanings, it suggests how we see as much through her as into her.
5. Orestes: on finding Electra, he finds that he had not known the real evils of the situation (line 1185), and he breaks silence, which later provokes chastisement from the old Tutor (lines 1326ff). Clytaemnestra: learns her enemies are at hand rather than dead (line 1405), and presumably dies corrected about the meaning of the dream. Aegisthus: learns that he had confused the living with the dead (lines 1477-79). Chrysothemis: refuses to accept Electra's teachings (in their second meeting), except in regard to the one point on which Electra is wrong, the tokens, about which Chrysothemis admits that she had been in error (lines 935-37). These and other references are to A. C. Pearson's Oxford text.
6. So *pote . . . nun*; aorist participle and present participle (lines 1-3).
7. See lines 683, 698-99, 723-24, 726, 743, 753, and 757.
8. This becomes clear through her correlation of the two, lines 88 and 92; both mean threnody (lines 88, 94). Compare her references to night and day, in the subjunctive with indefinite conjunction (lines 91-92), with the use by the Paedagogus of the perfect indicative (lines 18-19). Cf. lines 201-4.
9. Lines 104-6; also lines 86-92.
10. Especially if, with Jebb, we read *aiei* in line 152, instead of Pearson's *aiai*.
11. See also lines 148, 165, etc. The only time the men use *aei* is in line 3, where the Paedagogus draws a sharp distinction between Orestes' constant yearning in the past and the present state of affairs when this yearning has given way to fulfillment. Cf. Electra's line 171.
12. Lines 103-6, 165, 207-8, 225.
13. Cf. B. M. W. Knox, "The *Ajax* of Sophocles," *HSCP* 65 (1961) 19 and 35, n.89.
14. The adverb *au*, at the beginning of the first speeches of both Chrysothemis and Clytaemnestra (lines 328 and 516), implies, as Jebb points out, the typical quality of the situation being exposed, its recurrence, etc.
15. Since the debate between Electra and Clytaemnestra exists, dramatically, in a timeless realm, certain special features of its language are not surprising. Particularly, the highly elaborated rhetorical structure of the two set-speeches, which T. B. L. Webster analyzes (or outlines) but fails to see in their dramatic context, *Introduction to Sophocles* (Oxford 1936) 149-51.
16. In a remarkable and rich passage, Clytaemnestra dwells on a similar modification in her sense of time: lines 780-83. She distinguishes clearly between a menacing ceaselessness, in which night and day merge, and the concrete physical moment. Of course Clytaemnestra has suddenly found release from perpetuity and from Electra.
17. See lines 1013 and 1024.
18. See especially lines 1127-30. We find the basic antithesis of time past and time present marked by *nun* in lines 1136, 1149, and 1168. But it is also strongly

marked by a sequence of aorist and present tenses (lines 1140-41 and 1163-67), or imperfect and present (or perfect) (lines 1143-49 and 1149-53), or imperfect and the aorist of irrevocable death (lines 1128, and 1154-59).

19. See her first words after Orestes shows the ring, line 1224, which imply that today's sunlight is both unique and dearest, a day of rejoicing. See also lines 1228-29.

20. See particularly the temporal connotations of lines 1234-35, 1240, and 1241-42.

21. Lines 1251-52 and 1264.

22. Lines 1337, 1368; 1338.

23. Lines 1134, 1335, 1344, 1368 twice, and 1369.

24. Cf. lines 1400-1, 1406, 1410, etc.; and, for the Chorus, lines 1413-14, 1433-34, etc.

25. Line 330, etc.

26. See Jebb's note *ad loc.* for a defense of the authenticity of these lines, accepted by later editors.

27. Cf. David Grene's translation: "When men are in the middle of trouble, when one is on the point of death, how can time matter?"

28. Cf. Jebb's translation: "When mortals are in the meshes of fate, how can such respite avail one who is to die?"

29. Cf. Lewis Campbell's translation: "For wherein, when mortals are involved in misery, should he who defers his death be profited by the delay?"

30. Lines 353-54, note *kerdos* associated with *logos* and waiting.

31. Its last occurrence is in line 1242.

32. Lines 646, 726, 1062, 1344, 1399, 1417, 1435, 1464, 1510.

33. So *saphē*, lines 18 and 41; *saphē sēmeia*, lines 23-24.

34. Sight: verbs in lines 3 and 9; the light, line 17; and all the surrounding landmarks.

Sound: cf. lines 9 and 18, and the references to speech.

In the Paedagogus' *rhexis*: lines 683, 684, 711, 712, 717, 737, etc.

35. So *hikomēn*, line 32; *hexomen*, line 53; *erchomai*, line 69; *banti*, line 74; *eximen*, line 75.

36. See especially line 734, and locative phrases as in line 748.

37. The catalog of post numbers, from one through ten (lines 701-8); "one" (line 690); the count of the laps run (as in line 726).

38. Lines 86-87.

39. See Parodos, Str. 3, as well as her re-evocation of Agamemnon's murder in the threnody.

40. Cf. lines 123, 224-25, 282-86, etc.

41. Lines 324, 328-29, 516-18. But, cf. lines 310-13.

42. See lines 1401, 1403, 1405; lines 1432, 1449, 1451, 1455; and cf. line 1489.

43. Lines 1495-96.

44. See, in addition to Electra's lines 1432, 1449, 1451, 1455, those of the Chorus and Orestes: lines 1402, 1422, 1424, 1428, 1429, 1433. And, later, those of Aegisthus and Orestes: lines 1455, 1459, 1461, 1466, 1471, 1475, all involving eyesight.

45. Cf. Orestes' reference to bringing back the urn, where the activity of feet is implicit, that of hands explicit (lines 53-54). So Electra mentions her own hands when she refers to prayer (line 1378); but of course no object is grasped. Cf. line 458.

46. Lines 326-27; cf. lines 405 and 431. At her second entrance, Chrysothemis announces that she is "bringing *hēdonas*" (line 873). Electra uses the word *pherein* of Chrysothemis (line 405) and of Orestes (line 1109).
47. The technical terms are *agein* and *antirropon*, following Jebb's note.
48. Lines 8, 20, 28, 32, 39, 45, 53, 64, 69, 71?, 74, 75.
49. Lines 730, 732, 733, 737?, 742, 744, 746?.
50. Line 1077; we remember her nightingale from lines 107 and 148.
51. Note the superlatives in lines 1089, 1095, and 1097.
52. There is reason to believe that Apollo was associated not only with "light" in general but with the sun in particular by the final quarter of the fifth century B.C. or even by the middle of the century. W. F. Otto writes, "As early as Aeschylus, in a lost tragedy called *Bassarai*, it was said that Orpheus revered Helios as the greatest of all gods and called him Apollo." *The Homeric Gods* (London, undated) 80. Other references in Aeschylus: *Prom.* 22, *Theb.* 859, and, especially, *Choe.* 985-87. Cf. Jane Harrison, *Prolegomena* ("Meridian Books," New York 1955) 462. The orthodox view, however, probably remains that of L. R. Farnell, *The Cults of the Greek States* (Oxford 1907) vol. IV, chap. iv, esp. 136ff.
53. The Chorus in the Parodos merge Orestes and Apollo in a brilliant figure of speech, lines 180-81.
54. Hence the title of his book, *Sophocles: Dramatist and Philosopher* (cited above, n.3). See also his *Greek Tragedy* (3rd edition) 129-32.
55. Lines 784-86.
56. C. H. Whitman does not believe that the gods are felt causing the events of the play. Rather, divinity exists *within* the characters, created by their moral achievements. *Sophocles* (Cambridge, Massachusetts 1951) 229, 245, 250. This view reduces cosmic circumstance to character, albeit character deified. Also, it might be argued that since *all* the characters accept the objective reality of divinities and other forces, we cannot find any suggestion within the play that Sophocles had doubts about this reality as Whitman supposes. Whitman's view seems to me much more clearly applicable to *Oedipus at Colonus*.
57. See lines 345-46, 384-90, 394-95, 398-99, 1027 (ironical), 1038-39, etc. When Electra reaches her decision to act, her *nous* has increased (line 1023).
58. Lines 135, 147-49; cf. line 345.
59. See E. R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkeley 1951) chap. i.
60. *Discovery of the Mind* (Oxford 1953) 17-18. Much in Snell's comment on Heraclitus B45 bears on the present discussion. Cf. Heraclitus' rejection of *polumathiā*, frg. B40.
61. Cf. the fragment of Heraclitus quoted above, B45.
62. Such language used by Electra: lines 341, 342, 941, 965, 966, 970, 989, 1250, etc.; cf. lines 129, 226, etc. Such language used by others: lines 322, 440, 473, 1010, 1015, etc.; cf. lines 154, 156, 198, 470, 770-71, 860, 952, etc.
63. Cf. line 218.
64. On the connection of *physis* with the divine, see W. Jaeger, *The Theology of the Early Greek Philosophers* (Oxford 1947) 203, n. 44. On the connection of *logos* with the divine in Gorgias, see C. P. Segal, "Gorgias and the Psychology of the *Logos*," *HSCP* 66 (1962) 120.
65. Cf. Orestes' application of the word to the Paedagogus, line 24, and the Paedagogus' application of it to him, line 753.
66. Not only J. T. Sheppard and those who accept his position in "Electra: a

Defense of Sophocles," *Classical Review* XLI, no. 1 (1927) 2-9, but even in certain respects H. D. F. Kitto (see below, n.67). For a general discussion of Sheppard's view of the play, see below, n.98.

67. So Kitto refers to the "hideousness" of Electra and Orestes (above, n.3), 135. His reaction, I believe, arises from his attempt, mentioned at the outset of this essay, to see the characters as realistic portraits of actual people.

68. *Dike*, and related concepts such as *Themis*, and invocations of just, avenging gods, dominate each of the three Stasima. Other important, explicit occurrences of the term: lines 37, 338 and 466, 1037 and 1041, 1211 and 1212, 1255, 1441, and 1505.

69. The crucial primary sources for the earliest conceptions of *Dike* are, apart from Homer and Hesiod, Solon frg. 1 and 3 (Diehl), Anaximander frg. B1 (Diels), and Heraclitus frg. B23, B80, and B94 (Diels). The discussion of *Dike* most relevant to the present interpretation of Sophocles is in F. M. Cornford, *From Religion to Philosophy* (Cambridge, England 1912) chap. vi, "The Mystical Tradition." See also E. R. Dodds, (above, n.59) 29ff; W. Jaeger, *The Theology of the Early Greek Philosophers* (Oxford 1949) especially chap. vii, "Heraclitus," and chap. vii, n. 41; and in Kirk and Raven, *The Presocratic Philosophers* (Cambridge, England 1957), the comments on Heraclitus B53 and B94 (215 and 229 in their numeration). The first critic to see the relevance of Anaximander's *Dike* for our play was, it seems, Kitto, whose instructive but brief and rather loosely developed comments may be found in the 3rd edition of *Greek Tragedy* 132-35.

70. For the idea of retribution and its presence throughout Greek religion and literature, see H. Kelsen, *Society and Nature* (Chicago 1943) chap. iv, and also his comments on Anaximander and Heraclitus, pp. 234ff. Kelsen's discussion seeks few nuances of meaning and hardly claims to interpret any given text. But he gives an impressive array of evidence on the prevalence of *Dike* and *Nemesis*.

71. This final reversal alone — a minor one, compared to the others — Kitto calls "perhaps the most shattering *coup de théâtre* ever invented," see *Greek Tragedy* 173 and 174.

72. Kelsen (above, n.70) chap. v.

73. Most recently, Herbert Musurillo, *Symbol and Myth in Ancient Poetry* (New York 1961) 75-77.

74. See G. Murray, "Excursus on the Ritual Forms Preserved in Greek Tragedy," in J. Harrison, *Themis* (Cambridge, England 1912).

75. Dodds believes that these *sophoi* were shamans. See above, n.59, 141 and 162, n. 39. If this is so, then Orestes' allusion is all the more ironical; for certainly he lacks any true kinship with these men.

76. The Paedagogus uses the verb *sōzein*, line 13,0 for the dangerous rescue of the infant Orestes; the now mature Orestes uses it in bland assurance that he will "be all right" (line 60).

77. Orestes' ironical detachment as he devises slaughter and his sense of the reality of life alone, and not that of death, shows his kinship to Apollo, equally the god of light, life, victory, and of slayings, revenge, and relentlessness. We first hear of Apollo, in the play, as *lukoktonos* (line 6); he kills the beast to preserve life. Apollo, who never witnesses defeat or death, yet who punishes lawbreakers out of hand, resembles *ergon*; for *ergon*, as we have seen, combines physical activity and movement with mechanistic matter of fact. Apollo,



however, is likewise the embodiment of an implacable *logos*: true oracle of the harsher necessities; a kind of destructive, valid insight.

78. Cf. lines 104-6, 119-20.

79. See lines 119-20, 305-6, 325; and lines 185-86. Cf. lines 164-65.

80. Lines 164-66 and 186.

81. Cf. lines 263, 272, 275, and 1190.

82. Lines 94-99, and the whole third Strophe of the Parodos. Cf. the Chorus' lines 125-26.

83. Those *motifs* throb incessantly throughout the Parodos. "If the dead are earth and nothing more," then all virtue is empty and life, meaningless. But the vitality of the dead absorbs Electra's consciousness and gives her the force to answer the Chorus' threadbare consolations, each of which attempts to win her back to acquiescence in the communal "facts of life."

84. Lines 354-56.

85. Lines 266, 283-85, 303-6, 354, 393.

86. Lines 164-72, 305-6.

87. Lines 810, 834, 856-57.

88. The word *Nemesis* first appears in the interchange between Electra and Clytaemnestra immediately after the *rhesis*: line 792. It will next appear as Aegisthus stands over the dead body of Clytaemnestra, immediately before his own fall: line 1467.

89. See Whitman (above, n.56) 168. Cf. G. Méautis, *Sophocle* (Paris 1957) 237ff, who emphasizes the mythical pattern of the *pathos* of the heroine.

90. Cf. her lines 979, 982, and especially 985, with Orestes' lines 59-60, 64-65, and 66.

91. Lines 940-41.

92. Lines 137-39.

93. Line 1316.

94. Lines 1137, 1163, and 1164; lines 1129 and 1166; lines 1149-59.

95. Marked by the prefix *ek-*: lines 1128, 1130, 1131, 1132, 1136. And the key word, *ekpempēin*, means "divorce." Forms of *pempēin*: lines 1128, 1130, 1132, 1155, 1158, 1163.

96. See lines 1136, 1137, 1138, 1141, etc.

97. Following David Grene's translation. Cf. Orestes' lines 59-60.

98. "In the *Electra* . . . the horror of matricide is practically ignored. Electra has no qualms; Orestes shows no signs of madness; the climax is formed, not by the culminating horror, the matricide, but by the hardest bit of work, the slaying of Aegisthus!" Gilbert Murray, quoted by J. T. Sheppard, *CQ* XII (1918) 80.

It is clear that the "culminating horror, the matricide," must find its place in an interpretation of the play; but its place must be the same as it is in the play. I cannot believe that there is an *issue* of matricide in the *Electra* at all. (And was matricide a live moral issue in the last quarter of the fifth century, any more than today?) However, let me make one or two further remarks about it. The burden of Sheppard's lucid argument, in *CQ* (1918), is that Sophocles was committed to a doctrine of *metriotēs* and that the *Electra* shows the heroine's tragic loss of this principle, a loss which the matricide completes and proves. But it seems to me that Electra violates *metriotēs* from her entrance on. She exhibits and defends, as her peculiar kind of *eusebeia*, an "excessive" and compulsive ethos of vengeance. It appears in the coarseness, concreteness, and

oversimplification of her image of the murder of Agamemnon, in the monody; in similar details throughout the Parodos (and the Chorus contribute some too) and her first set-speech; in the gruesome image of mutilation in the long speech to Chrysothemis; in her loss of control when attacking her mother to her face; and of course in the decision to kill Aegisthus. With these things in mind it is hard to see how Electra's moral character darkens and declines in the course of the play, as Sheppard would have it. Can we doubt that the Electra of the Parodos would zealously cry "Strike again if you can!" to Orestes murdering his mother? If not, then her character must be as justifiable in the whole drama as it surely is in the Parodos (and not even Sheppard denies her nobility, humanity, and justice there).

But, even if Sophocles was not committed to the principle of *metriotēs*, would not Electra's wish for the denial of burial to Aegisthus, and her contribution to the matricide have offended the author of the *Antigone*? The *Antigone* is closely analogous to the *Electra*; the analogy was perhaps used by Sophocles to point up certain fundamental divergences between the two heroines. In the present instance, we must note that Aegisthus is not presented as a relative of Electra's; he is a murderer of her father. Clytaemnestra must die, and Electra must hate her absolutely. Antigone decides what to do before the play begins and has no further scruples; Electra gradually develops toward a decision to act. Electra does not raise her hand against her mother, as in Euripides, only her voice; and the just deed is Orestes', as in Aeschylus, and as it was Antigone's. Similarly, he *must* kill his mother; he is not left with the choice that his counterpart in Aeschylus has.

If we do not condemn the matricide on *a priori* grounds, as a violation of *metriotēs* (and see Whitman, above, n.56, *passim*); if we take into account C. M. Bowra's study of the legal considerations, in *Sophoclean Tragedy* (Oxford 1944) chap. vi; if we notice how the murder of Clytaemnestra has been treated dramatically (Gilbert Murray's observations, quoted above, are quite precise), and what has been called the *suppression* of the theme of matricide in the play (A. J. A. Waldock, *Sophocles the Dramatist* (Cambridge, England 1951) 177ff and 186ff; the same idea was expressed by A. S. Owen, *CR* (May 1927) 50-52); and if we come to accept, as we should realize Sophocles himself did, the substratum of horror in the world, and the admixture of harshness in the processes of justice; then we are left with scot-free vengeance, noble heroine, and affirmative drama.

99. See lines 1-2, 115-17, 461-63, etc.

100. See lines 1417-21.

101. For example, we saw that the Paedagogus depicted Orestes as the "fallen" (lines 747 and 749ff, discussed above); Aegisthus uses the same word of himself when he learns the identity of Orestes (line 1477; also in 1467; and cf. *esphallou*, line 1481).

102. Lines 1475, 1477, 1481. Cf. Aegisthus' line 1479.

103. See lines 17-19, 91-92, 105-6, 201-3, 259, 780, 1365 etc.

104. See, for example, lines 260 and 1363.



## FUSION IN PINDAR

BY THOMAS HOEY, S.J.

ANYONE so rash as to predict the twists and turns of a Pindaric sentence would not only be wrong all the time: he would (in Pindar's own words) be a victim of "sharper madnesses" for not realizing that, especially here, "the streams of prevision recede."<sup>1</sup> Pindar's language plays hob with prognosis. He throws away sentence protocol for a poetical syntax of his own which tends to invert most, if not all, of the expected primacies. Parts of speech which one might have thought would dominate their sentences fall off his pen in curious attitudes of subordination: grammatical subjects are made submissive to their objects; predicates seem not to be attributes incorporated in their subjects, but spacious universal presences wherein these subjects are permitted to inhere; action itself becomes ambiguous in that agents seem to be operated from without rather than to perform on their own — *potius aguntur quam agunt*. One does not play the lyre but "falls in with" it; one is not powerful but "mixed with power"; one does not win or lay hold of victory but "falls in the lap" of it.<sup>2</sup> Of course Pindar does not always speak this way, nor is he the only one ever to speak this way, but he does it usually enough and uniquely enough that the mode may fairly be characterized as his.

"Who's got the action?" is a modern colloquialism, far from elegant. But the question itself is valid and very old. Its philosophic side is pointed up in the scholastic paradox, *actio est in passo*.<sup>3</sup> Poetical criticism, too, has found it a difficult question to answer. A childlike, unsophisticated reading of Homer would gather that the gods do everything. If they wish a hero to conquer, they make his limbs light, guide his spear right (or give it back to him if it misses), and send his opponent just the opposite luck.<sup>4</sup> Another interpretation would see in the divine machinery little more than symbolic predicates of purely human action: Athena clutched Achilles by the hair, which is to say, Achilles counted ten.<sup>5</sup> As Heraclitus put it, "man's providence is his own character."<sup>6</sup> There may not be a middle ground in Homer; the gods seem to do everything or nothing. But it is not so in Pindar. When an athlete is victorious, the question again arises, Who really did the



winning? Was it the athlete himself? or his heredity? or divine grace? or (here enters the Pindaric harmony) are all these three causations really one and did they operate together in a fused sort of way? Finley has noted that there is a basic Pindaric metaphor which tends to identify victors with ancestral heroes and with gods in a vertical unity.<sup>7</sup> All three are somehow one, and therefore they *act* somehow as one. But all are not equally important. Pindar stresses divine grace most, then inborn qualities, and finally acquired qualities and the ethic of hard work. He by no means underplays the third factor: athletes must train; men in general must learn and be educated; they must not renege at the critical moment of performance; and it is possible for a man to discredit his nature and his ancestry.<sup>8</sup> But the greater explicit stress falls on forces outside man's control, and it does not seem unreasonable to think that these same forces are implicitly, perhaps even more strikingly, emphasized by Pindar's subordinating syntax wherein man the agent appears to become a patient, or an experiencer, and not so much to lay hold of his surrounding context as to be graciously assimilated thereunto. In this connection Pindar's uses of *μίγνυμι* may be instructive.

Whatever may have been his dependence upon Empedocles for the Second Olympian,<sup>9</sup> there seems a deeper kinship between the two men than could passingly be revealed in one ode. The phases of Empedocles' cosmogony show the world at one time in a process of coalition, its basic elements being mixed together by the force of Love. When this phase is complete, a harmonious divine sphere results which contains the now undifferentiated totality of all things. Individuality has been lost in the divine and cannot be rediscovered except by a return to those sharp-faced lessernesses which, if radically still divine, existentially are a fractured god. This return promptly ensues. There begins a gradual influx of Strife, un-mixing the sphere and breaking up the harmony.<sup>10</sup> Preoccupation with mixing is also characteristic of Pindar, and in two ways: a theoretical and practical. As thinker, Pindar is absorbed with the *notion* of mixing, and as poet he is engaged in its practice. Poetry is always in some sense an impropriety, since it puts together elements which *proprio sensu* belong apart. Yet in good poetry the elements melt and fuse, for there are felt norms which govern symbolic combination, however impossible it may be to formulate them. Pindar's practice has given rise to special problems, notably about his "mixed" metaphors. Evidently there is a good and there is a bad way to mix things, and in any mixture sharp differentiation is apt to suffer, as it did in Empedocles' cosmogony. If it suffers to the extent that the mind cannot focus the

new creation, the result must be condemned. This question will be discussed at greater length below. First, however, it may be helpful to consider Pindar's world-view, if only briefly. For it is from here that the fact must stem that his poetry is, for better or worse, an extraordinary amalgam of symbolic materials. His fused style may be taken to reflect a vision which would see the world in coalescence, the human commingling with the divine.

Of *μῑγννμι* alone, not to count other words which express a like idea, there are thirty-three occurrences in the extant Pindar. Only two of these show no human person as a term in the mixture, but even here the merely physical does not remain merely physical: sacrifices are mixed with fire on the far-shining altars of the gods; honey is mixed with white milk and mantled round with an excitement of foam, making a song to drink.<sup>11</sup> The physical elements are weighted with symbolism which, like Achilles' armor, renders them ethereal and lifts them to a higher plane. But by far the greatest incidence of the verb involves human beings who are mingled in varying ways with other terms: with love-partners (usually divine), with physical symbols of victory, and with more or less pure abstractions. Thus Pitane is mixed with Poseidon; the people of Sicily are mixed with golden leaves of olives; the ruler of Syracuse is mixed with power.<sup>12</sup>

The syntax of *μῑγννμι* usually involves a dative (*μῑγννναι τί τινι*) which could be construed as instrumental, but is often felt, especially in Pindar, as being somehow locative, and as implying not just a means of causation, or even an encompassing and friendly fold or place, but an animate presence. Once this verb is chosen, a kind of vague primacy, or at least largeness, seems accruing to the dative term. And frequently this fact involves surprise, for we should not normally think of an athlete as subordinated to his victory flowers or of a king as subordinated to his own might. The latter should be adjuncts, and he the principal, but in Pindar it is often not so. And with the Greek writers generally it is not always so, though no one before or after Pindar carried the surprise to such lengths as he. Perhaps he was taking on from the paradox to be seen in the union of the sexes, for it is in this sense that *μῑγννμι* is most often used by him — twelve times out of its thirty-three occurrences.<sup>13</sup> It is normal, if superficial, to think at first that the male principle is the active and dominant term in the relationship and that the female is passive and subordinate. But Aphrodite smiles and knows better. And Sartre's analysis tends to award the mastery to the female as being the enfolder — the assimilating one.<sup>14</sup> In seeming to be conquered she emerges the curious winner, for hers is the larger presence,

the ὀμφαλὸς γῆς, which enshrines and reduces to subjection all who come there.

This is not to say that Pindar, or the Greeks, always assigned to the female this dative, and in some sense dominant, rôle. Pindar's distribution could not be more impartial, for he shows four each of male and female datives, and four instances where there is no dative at all. With him, as with other Greeks, the female is accorded equal primacy in the world of syntax, which may well be their subtle way of remarking on the paradox which has found expression also, though perhaps less delicate, in other languages. What is special with Pindar is not his use of *μίγνυμι* in this sort of context, but his ability to take on from there and extend the surprise to other areas also.

Ellendt's *Lexicon Sophocleum* says of *Electra*, 1485: "Audacter βροτοὶ σὺν κακοῖς μεμιγμένοι *homines dicuntur misera sorte utentes*" [his italics].<sup>15</sup> This is the sole place in Sophocles where human beings are spoken of as commingling with terms that verge upon abstraction, and Ellendt thinks the usage bold. There had been nothing so abstract in Aeschylus, but Pindar provided ample precedent. Homer, too, even more abstractly than Sophocles, had written: ἄνδρας . . . μισγόμεναι κακότητι καὶ ἄλγεσι.<sup>16</sup> The evils with which Sophocles mixes his mortals are not pure abstractions, though they are generic rather than specific. They are like defecting concretions, falling away toward abstraction, but not yet quite there. The example from Homer has one pure abstraction ("evilness") and one defecting concretion ("pains"), the latter being similar to the "evils" in Sophocles. Again, Homer combines abstract and concrete in the formula ἐμίγην φιλότῃτι καὶ εὐνῇ.<sup>17</sup> There is a sense in which it is just as poetical to proceed from concrete to abstract as from abstract to concrete. The first process universalizes the individual and the second process individualizes the universal, and both ways the result is what has been called the hallmark of the classical style, a concrete universal.<sup>18</sup> Kenneth Burke has suggested that synecdoche is not only intrinsic to the poetic process, but almost its very essence.<sup>19</sup> And it seems equally synecdochic (hence poetic) whether one substitutes abstract for concrete or concrete for abstract. Our present concern is with the former substitution. Two examples, one from philosophy and one from Homer, may clarify this point.

There is not such an inveterate quarrel between poetry and philosophy that they cannot serve to elucidate each other. A philosophical world-view found expression in the highly poetical verses of Empedocles; and Aristotle, despite his deprecating remarks about Empedocles,<sup>20</sup> is in some sense the world's first critic of poetry. There is a logical type of

philosopher who is interested in classifying reality; he assigns concrete individual instances to their proper categories. If this sort of philosopher hears the statement, "John is cruel," he does not think of cruelty as a quality affecting John. He thinks rather of a whole universal class of cruel things, and of John as fitting into that class. He "mixes" John with cruelty, or at least positions John logically inside cruelty, subordinating the subject to the predicate, rather in the spirit of Pindar. But cruelty remains an abstract category. There is a second type of philosopher whose approach is more psychological. He would see cruelty as something actualized here and now in a concretely real way, and as an attribute of John, subordinated to John as accident is to substance. This view seems less abstractly logical than does the former view, but it does not seem very Pindaric either. And yet to ally Pindar with an abstractly logical as against a concretely real viewpoint does not ring true. One feels that when Pindar "mixes" his subjects with his predicates, he is thinking of these latter, not as abstract, but as concrete universals, somewhat like Plato's Forms. The Greek tendency to concretize the universal has already been remarked; Pindar seems, as so often, to invert things and to universalize the concrete.

An example from Homer will perhaps show how this process, which is basically one of synecdoche, might evolve. There is an English cliché identical with one used by Homer: he and we both speak of "mingling with the dust."<sup>21</sup> Because the expression is familiar to our own language, Homer's use of it does not strike us as surprising. But essentially it is surprising, for it inverts due, or at least expected, primacies. Man is the highest thing under the sun; dust, the lowest. *He* should conquer *it*. His conquest of it consists in his keeping it in its place, beneath his feet, and not so much as being stained by it. Even when he fails and does become stained (and to that extent conquered) still he remains the principal and dust the accessory. But when this primacy too is upset, so that dust becomes not just a staining adjunct but an enveloping fold, then there is a situation which is poetical and surprising. A mode of synecdoche has operated: container has become contained, principal has become accessory. And this would be true if the only terms in the relationship were "man" and "dust" and there were no connotation of a second man who had defeated the first in battle. "Dust" would remain closer to the imagistic level, with fewer of those extra connotations which turn image into symbol. But as fire throws off light and heat so spontaneously that it is difficult to say what fire is itself, apart from those, so the physical realities which are the stuff of images do, anywhere else but in a scientific laboratory, tend spontaneously to throw off extra



meaning and thus to become symbols. In our example the dust, simultaneously with its own imagistic and (to some extent) symbolic values, is a concrete symbol of defeat *by another human being*, which is the usual, and in that sense the most universal, form of defeat to be found in Homer. The further step into pure abstraction, where one will say that the warrior was "mingled with defeat," is almost taken already. It is certainly not far or difficult. However, Homer did not actually take it. Perhaps, as with the physical death of Achilles, he considered it as good as done anyway. And he did take the step in other, analogous connections, as has been shown. The dust-example is useful in that it exemplifies how a process might evolve which is concurrently from literal toward symbolic and from concrete toward abstract. There seem to be five stages: (1) man walks upon dust, unstained by it, fully the conqueror; (2) he is stained by it, and no longer the conqueror, but he is still the main entity and dust is subordinate; (3) the subordination is reversed and the man is absorbed into the dust; (4) dust, until now scarcely more than a physical entity, becomes symbolic of defeat at the hands of another warrior, and a concrete universal results: dust = defeat; (5) concreteness falls away, as a flying bird might be thought of as "pure flight," and the man is simply "mingled with defeat," which seems like the most absolute way to indicate the nadir that has been reached. Such a process seems to have taken place in Pindar even more remarkably, and this we shall now examine.

The Homeric mingling-with-dust is so poetically right because it totally expresses, insofar as can be done this side of pure abstraction, the nadir of defeat. The warrior is not only beaten by another warrior; he is not only stained with dust (which would be defeat enough and is what literally happens anyway, for even a slain corpse should retain its primacy over the earth on which it lies); but, surprisingly and synecdochically, the warrior is made inferior and accessory to that normally most subject of all elements — the ground on which he walked with two feet at noon and on which his conqueror still walks. The epinician and basically untragic Pindar is concerned to express zeniths rather than nadirs, victories rather than defeats. The image which he uses to produce the desired expression is one, not of war, but of love. It is here perhaps that he is most Empedoclean, for the philosopher of Acragas saw the world-elements as moving toward divinity through a commingling process wrought by the force of Love. For Pindar, the love-notations of *μῆνυμι* may be the launch-pad whence he takes off toward new syntactical spheres and the rarefied space of increasingly purer abstraction.

The contexts in which *μίγνυμι* is used by Pindar may be graded into six categories: physical, military, social, sexual, epinician, and essential. It has already been noted that even the physical contexts are not *merely* such, but are laden with connotation. They do not, however, involve surprise or the inversion of primacies. Neither do the military or social contexts, and there are two instances of each.<sup>22</sup> But these military and social uses of the verb are more spiritual than those on the first level, at least insofar as they involve human terms. The final three levels — sexual, epinician, and essential — are where by far the greatest incidence of *μίγνυμι* occurs in Pindar, and they carry the spiritualization progressively upward until, on what I have called the essential level, a human term is mingled with a pure abstraction. This point seems to mark the Pillars of Heracles for Pindar. He does not use forms of *μίγνυμι* to represent the ultimate attainment of divinity. Except in the case of heroes he says little, and that very fleetingly, about after-worldly fulfillment; nor does he guess (at least out loud) at what ordinary mortals may hope for. He dwells rather on those transient investitures with the Zeus-given splendor which are man's way on earth of capturing, if only for a moment, a share in the divine.<sup>23</sup> Still it is hard to think that such moments did not foretoken for Pindar an everlasting moment outside process. The fact that he did not quite say so may be ascribed to his reverential humility when speaking of things to do with divinity. There are subjects, he declared, which are better for not being expressed in words.<sup>24</sup>

If divinity is at the end of man's spiritual ascent, it also is at the beginning. Victory, even in games, is divinity as shared. And even prior to that, birth itself or initiation into life is divinity as summoning. Most of the sexual uses of *μίγνυμι* describe the begetting of heroes and involve divine parents, and it is usually these divinities which are represented in the enfolding dative case. The human half of the parentage was required to answer a call, for in order that humanity may achieve at least the intermediate, and perhaps the ultimate, stages of victory, it must respond at the initial stage to divinity's spontaneous advances. Heroic, and perhaps ordinary, humanity is meant to embrace the call, and to proceed through the various stages of victory until the ultimate one, wherewith the cycle is completed.<sup>25</sup> Heracles and Achilles are received into the golden kingdom, and divinity is both beginning and end.<sup>26</sup>

If victory did not, for Pindar, mean divinity in some shape or other, how could he so habitually have subordinated his human victors to the mere symbols of victory or to the psychological states resulting from it? We too speak of people as "rolling in wealth" or "in the grip of a

cold" or "in the throes of despair." In an occasional way the practice is common. But why seems it so particular with Pindar? And why so predilected that it is almost his normal mode? It clamors for explanation when someone *constantly* speaks in this inverted way. Pindar says that a man is mixed with golden leaves of olives (*N.* 1. 17) or with eight crowns of victory (*N.* 2. 22) or with flowers (*N.* 4. 21) or with laudatory speech (*I.* 3. 33). If one saw in these victory-symbols an expression of divinity, it would all make sense.

At any rate, these symbols are at one level of abstraction: they are concrete realities and can be seen or heard. They are not pure abstractions, but still they are readable by the mind and not only by the senses. Pindar reaches a still more abstract level when he speaks of mixing a king with power (*O.* 1. 22) or of mixing men with city-ruling splendors (*N.* 9. 31) or with splendors in general (*O.* 1. 91) or with fair-blossomed fortune (*P.* 9. 72) or with bittersweet surprise (*N.* 1. 55) or with immortal honors (*I.* 2. 28). It is remarkable how consistently beneficent are these Pindaric comminglings, as if they too — like the earlier sexual comminglings with divinity — proceeded from the force of Love. It is also as if they too were themselves a commingling with divinity, only more rarefied and sacramental. The symbols and the states-of-being seem to be sacraments through which divinity descends. Man is subordinated to the leaves of victory or to abstract splendor, and by the same token he is subordinated and united to divinity.

The call to greatness which Pindar's mortals experience is a kind of *noblesse oblige*. It is a call coming down from the gods through ancestry and geography, for distant divine intercourse has invaded both. In that vocational way there is an initial commingling with divinity, and thereafter this divinity takes the form of victory to be won. It is something not firmly possessed, but to be sought, and perhaps in an increasingly pure and abstract form. The comparison of God to a bird that is pure flight once more comes to mind. It all seems to express a benevolent circumambience and a promise that divinity may be won if man but recognizes that there is a right and a wrong way to do it. He cannot leap up to the brazen sky, nor must he seek *idly* to be Zeus; he must not try to encompass but to be encompassed.<sup>27</sup>

If the preceding remarks are even slightly to the point, then one of the chief ideas which Pindar entertained was that of reality as fusible. To a degree unparalleled among the Greeks, this was also his idea of language. He has been accused of mixing metaphors, which, like splitting an English infinitive, is often assumed to be a sin. He has been exonerated on the score that (usually) he does not mix the metaphors

but only crowds them.<sup>28</sup> This leaves him with a strung style of metaphorical juxtaposition. Certainly the juxtapositional theory will explain some of his highly imagistic passages,<sup>29</sup> but scarcely enough of them for it to be relevant. Pindar is concerned with poetical strings and strands, but not in a juxtaposing way: he intertwines them.<sup>30</sup>

*Kairos* is one of his favorite words: he uses it some seventeen times, and what it stands for, though somewhat mysterious, is among his most revered realities. He does not make it into an outright god, as others later did, but he treats it with almost the worship of a devotee, and sometimes (it might seem) with the love of a father. It is so germane a child of his world-view that he could be imagined to have discovered, if not created, it. Not in all its meanings, of course. The noun itself existed before him, though not in Homer.<sup>31</sup> Norwood's insight, as so often, seems brilliant. Setting the word's uses in *P.* 1. 81ff and *P.* 9. 76ff beside the reference in *P.* 4. 247 to a "certain short path," he argues from its connections with small compass and with the "critical moment" that Pindar is here telling us, in his own way, that he is the inventor of dramatic lyric.<sup>32</sup> Thus *kairos* would be the critical moment which contains the essence of a longer history. Pindar's triumph would lie in his ability to select that moment out of the long succession of mythical material and to set it in brief form before his audience. This interpretation emphasizes the temporal meanings of the word, brings out its perhaps specially Pindaric connection with the idea of brevity, and is directly relevant to the myth sections of Pindar's lyric. Norwood says nothing about the etymology of *kairos*, perhaps because there is no agreement on the point.<sup>33</sup> But his placing of the two *kairos*-passages beside *καί τινα οἶμον ἴσαμι βραχύν*, and his statement that Pindar "will attain his goal by a *short cut*" [my italics] may be felicitous. If the derivation is actually from *κείρω*, as some think and as might be confirmed by the razor-edge motif in representations of the subsequent divinity,<sup>34</sup> then "short cut" would emerge as a delightfully accurate translation.

Yet Donaldson, in a thoroughgoing note to *O.* 9. 38, warns (as Burton has more recently done) that the temporal is by no means the only sense of *kairos*.<sup>35</sup> Short cuts imply space as well as time. Fowler's discussion of metaphor deprecates expressions like "impose a stimulus" or "staving off the brand," and says: "It looks as if the writer had meant by a short cut to give us both ideas." Again he speaks, not in approval, of "a short cut to the expression of two different metaphors."<sup>36</sup> The economy seems not only one of time but also of scope or canvas — which are spatial terms. That Pindar achieved such economy is sure,



though whether it can be called *καιρός* in any but an accommodated sense is doubtful. Pindar's vocabulary sometimes lends itself to accommodation, and seems in a perhaps unconscious way to light up the very heart of his poetic processes. It seems likely that the direct reference of *καιρός* in *P.* 1. 81 is to temporal brevity, for it is this which incurs "less blame from men." Spatial brevity, especially Pindar's, could well incur *more* blame, for it leads him into interwoven language which his public, he knows, finds difficult. Even from modern readers he has received a share of blame for mixing metaphors. He would not be surprised at censure, ancient or modern, but would reply in lofty fashion that the greater part of men are blind at heart, that his arrows sing only for the wise, and that wisdoms are steep.<sup>37</sup> Yet here in *P.* 1 he appears to think that the public should be humored. It is an incidental concession, transiently made, and it touches only the one matter of temporal brevity. Pindar sought condensed expression because it was essential to his, and perhaps to all, poetic processes (one would like to think that the German word *Dichter* came from *dichten*, "to condense," but it seems not to be so). If the audience disliked the interwovenness of his language, at least they would have the temporal solace of knowing that it would be soon over. And yet it is impossible to think that this was the primary reason why he espoused brevity. Rather, brevity was the essence of his style, which style derived from his poetic instinct to get as much meaning into as small a space as possible. This involved the intertwining in delicate tension (which seems to be part of what *συντανύσας* means) of as many themes as might be. They often seem as if they should clash, yet somehow they hold together.

It has been said that, "To read Pindar . . . feels like passing one's hand over a surface tingling with electricity."<sup>38</sup> Yet why is there not an explosion? Why does the electricity stay quiet, the power gentle? Pindar said that Hesychia understood the secret of gentleness, alike in rendering and receiving, and that she did this *καιρῷ σὺν ἄτρεκεϊ*.<sup>39</sup> *καιρός* is a fusion of opposites, but a fusion in precise proportion. There is a suggestion of that which is "just right," but which so easily might have been all wrong. It is an inextended point, of time or space, and it exists thanks to a convergence of components — be they circumstances or images or whatever — in highly delicate balance. Pindar fuses together, in exact proportion, imagistic elements which ought to have been unsociable and foreign to each other, but whose differences melt in the fire of his poetics. One thinks of his frequent uses of *φλέγω* in reference to his composition.<sup>40</sup> All metaphor is a joining of foreign things, if they *will* join. Pindar sees to it that they will, and ordinary

norms are somehow transcended. Foreign to each other as the prospective members of his new *imago creanda* may be, he is able to extract what is relevant and usable, and to melt the rest away. He "plucks the essences" or "plucks the heads" from the imagistic parts, as he said Hieron plucked the essences of virtues, or as Athena put together a "many-headed tune."<sup>41</sup> Regarding δρέπων κορυφάς, one notes that δρέπω can connote cutting, and in *P.* 9. 78f, Pindar writes:

ὁ δὲ καιρὸς ὁμοίως  
παντὸς ἔχει κορυφάν.

Pindar is ecumenical at heart, as *P.* 1, just before the passage cited, makes clear. He can become all things to all countries. Hence it is not surprising that in his image-making he should labor to reconcile differences. The καιρός upon which he lights, not jarring it with a false-ringing note,<sup>42</sup> is in part the fusion of foreign elements. Their fusion in a magical and precarious kind of new unity is especially Pindaric, and destroys in advance much of what Fowler calls "the nonsense that is talked about mixed metaphor."<sup>43</sup> Perhaps it destroys some of Fowler's own norms, though he presumably was not legislating for Pindar but for the rest of us, who would doubtless do well to heed him. One may admire, but probably not imitate, Pindar: *Pindarum quisquis studet aemulari* . . .

We turn now to examples of "mixed" metaphor both in Pindar and others. A Byron fragment contains the line, "Could I remount the river of my years . . ." There are two metaphors here, and the question is, Do they clash. "River of my years" (like "mobled queen") is good, for time has been immemorially compared to a river. But can you *mount* something which is horizontal? And, apart from metaphor, what is to be said of the logic? Can you *remount* something if you have not mounted it a first time, but have rather descended it? The questions are silly. But the answer is yes in each case. A stream, though horizontal, has ups and downs, vertical as these may seem to be. If one can go upstream, one can mount a river. And "remount" does not here mean to mount a second time, but to retrace one's steps or re-swim one's strokes. The verbal prefix does not govern the specific idea of its verb but the generic idea of motion. Hence Byron's expression, while condensed and rich, is perfectly clear and coherent.

But could one describe an advancing army as a "river of lions"?<sup>44</sup> Again there are two metaphors, and again there is a condensed richness of meaning. The lions make the army terrible and destructive; the river makes it voluminous, orderly (perhaps), and resistless. In fact, the

sole thing which might seem able to stop its progress is imagistic collision. Is there any? One way to establish a negative reply is to invoke an implicit image of fire. Advancing fire can be made into a river, so why not advancing destruction in any form? The lions are not a fluid and homogeneous continuity, as is fire, and one counts them rather than measures them. Fire is thus a better physical analogue of the river. But the lions are a functional analogue of the fire, which latter is the unseen mediator between the two parts of the expression. Or perhaps such subliminal probing is unnecessary. For one could see the army voluminously advancing and be reminded of a river, then he could reflect on the army's destructive function and think of lions. Or the sequence could be reversed. Either way, what the lions are imagistically doing is connected with their function and not with their physical qualities. The army does not have to look like them but to perform like them. The poet has extracted an essence from "lions" and another from "river" and has fused them into something "virtual," that is, nowhere to be found on earth,<sup>45</sup> but still something which richly represents reality.

The river of lions cannot quite be photographed. Nevertheless, or perhaps because of this fact, it brings us rather closer to Pindar. A passage in Rupert Brooke is reminiscent in several ways of *I. 7. 27-37*. Both passages treat, in similar mood, of young men who died in war:

These laid the world away; poured out the red  
Sweet wine of youth; gave up the years to be  
Of work and joy, and that unhopèd serene,  
That men call age; and those who would have been,  
Their sons, they gave, their immortality.<sup>46</sup>

Beside "poured out the red/sweet wine of youth" one may set *εὐονθὲρ ἀνέπνευσας ὀλκίαν*. Brooke's metaphor is easy to photograph; it comes before us in full ocular clarity. Red wine is a physical analogue of blood (though it is better old than young, as Pindar remarked).<sup>47</sup> Wine is also sweet and precious. Physically it mingles dangerously, and metaphorically it mingles easily, with the blood of youth. This is no difficult metaphor, and it is a very fine one. But what is Pindar's image when he says, "having breathed away fair-flowered youth"? One can scarcely reply that the image is of a flower (= a youth) and that flowers in some sense breathe, and can therefore expire. The image is not so self-identified. When we speak of a man as "laying down his life" we separate his identity from the reality of the life which he lays down, and in the present passage the young man is separated in identity from the youthfulness which he breathes forth. And how can he, *flos iuventutis*



though he is, in any sense breathe forth a flower? He could breathe forth its fragrance, conceivably, but it seems unsatisfactory to think that Pindar meant that. Perhaps we can separate the abstract youthfulness from the concrete youth and image the latter as breathing forth the former. But in any event the eyes have difficulty focusing the picture, while it seems safe to say that the mind has no difficulty with the idea. Despite all that gets said about Pindar's imagistic sensuousness, he himself said, not that his images were the fruit of his senses, but of his mind.<sup>48</sup> What he seems to have done in the present passage is to pluck the heads or extract the essences from two different images, and out of them he has mixed a *πόμ' αἰδίμουν*.<sup>49</sup> If he had written "cut down fair-flowered youth,"<sup>50</sup> the metaphor would be purer — and poorer. The tragic note of untimely death would still be there, but the pathos of breath denied — breath being the commonest and most rightfully one's own of all consumer's goods — would be absent, to the disenrichment of the figure. It may be right to condemn individual phrases like "impose a stimulus" as short cuts to the expression of two ideas. But it seems hard to formulate a general norm, self-evident to the mind, whereby such a practice is obviously bad in general. It may sometimes be that individual examples must be judged on their own felt merits, independently of general rules. After all, even the rules of prose sequence in Latin indirect discourse are a fair muddle if one tries to formulate them. But if, as one prose composition book was bold enough to suggest,<sup>51</sup> one trusts to instinct apart from rules he cannot go very far wrong. Pindar at any rate seems to transcend legislation.

Norwood's claim has already been noted, that Pindar's metaphors are not mixed but closely successive. This will explain passages like, "Steer your state with just helm and forge your speech on the anvil of truth." But it will not explain, "Like a local-champion cock, by your home hearth, ungloried would the fame of your feet have shed its leaves."<sup>52</sup> These images do not simply follow, they trespass, upon each other. Yet no harm, but only good, seems to come of it. Pindar seizes upon the relevancy (the capital thing or head or *κορυθῇ*) in each imagistic member, plucks it, and drops the rest. He does not fuse wholes together into further wholes, but he fuses capital parts<sup>53</sup> in a delicate confederation that somehow coheres. He trusts that the mind of his listener will accept some elements and suppress others. The mind has its whims and vagaries, perhaps not altogether logical and certainly difficult to formulate, but they are universally enough shared that by and large there will be agreement as to what will and will not pass. Thus the sane listener will not wonder whether the fighting-cock is caged beside the



hearth or whether its feathers drop to signal an ended career. Nor will he ask whether it is an outdoor tree or a potted plant that sheds its leaves; still less whether feet can have leaves to shed. These are not the points of conjunction. The cock is a stay-at-home contestant, as the athlete might have been a stay-at-home runner. His feet are his running, and that can have fame, narrow or wide. The hearth is home. And fame, not feet, can be a tree. Pindar might have retained only the chief image of a tree, saying: "If you race only at home you will be like all local champions, and at home will the leaves of your reputation fall unknown to glory." That is what, in the disenrichment of imagistic paraphrase, he *has* said, but he has eked the expression out with other concrete imagery which is relevant at one point or another, though tangential to the main picture. He trusts his audience not to let the tangents cut in. The registering of imagery is less a matter of photography than of intelligence. How can one mentally photograph the frequent adjectives "storm-footed" or "wing-footed"?<sup>54</sup> But surely they are better than "very fast." The extra pieces of physical imagery enforce the idea, provided we do not try to articulate them with a picture of physical feet. Gildersleeve has a fleeting but precious note on θερμὰ Νυμφᾶν λουτρὰ βαστάξεις from the same ode in which the leaf-shedding-tree passage occurs: "The figure is not fully felt, else it would be absurd."<sup>55</sup> If one changes the word "felt" to "photographed" the statement seems even truer.

In *I. 2. 35*, Pindar writes μακρὰ δισκήσαις ἀκοντίσσαιμι. Farnell makes perfect and sober sense out of the expression by assuming two separate events to which Pindar sees his poetics as successively assimilated.<sup>56</sup> Norwood thinks Pindar is in no specially sober mood at this moment, and translates, "oh for a long javelin-cast with the quoit!" He comments that the words "cannot be tolerably explained except as a smiling parody of his [Pindar's] own manner."<sup>57</sup> This appears to mean that Pindar's usual way is to mix up diverse images, though less extravagantly. Perhaps, too, Pindar's mood is prompting him to become all things to all athletes at once, and so his poetry, which is wont to become all events one after another,<sup>58</sup> is exuberantly here becoming two events simultaneously. If the supposition as to Pindar's gay mood is right, it is tempting to suppose that he is extracting the essences of two actions, this time in a blatant way. If ancient discus-throwing was like modern — and Myron's statue indicates it was — then its most spectacular feature was the wind-up before the delivery. But Pindar's habitual delivery was of pointed, not circular, missiles,<sup>59</sup> and so it is a javelin that actually flies from his hand. From the two events he creams

off the most impressive features — discus wind-up and javelin cast — making an exuberant, and certainly a virtual, idea, though not a clearly focused picture. If one prefers Farnell's explanation, it is perceptive and sensible, though it separates events instead of fusing them.

The kind of fusion thus far considered is specially, though not uniquely, Pindaric. It operates as it were on a two-dimensional field, or on a canvas. Elements, foreign but sociable, are interconnected from different quarters of the chosen imagistic area, and are held together in a state of dynamic tension, which state may reasonably be called a *καίρὸς*, by an accommodation of the meaning of that word. This kind of fusion may, somewhat awkwardly, be called "planar" in order to distinguish it from another and more usual kind, which I shall call "linear." Linear fusion is simply ambiguity or *double entendre* and it may exist in a single word or be sustained throughout a considerable passage. The distinction between linear and planar is not hard and fast, for the fusions themselves tend to fuse, but in a large sort of way it perhaps will work. Linear fusion is in one dimension, that is, pure length: two currents of meaning travel simultaneously along one linguistic wire. Planar fusion is a network of conductors, interfused to deliver one message; the unity is in the meaning rather than in the vehicle. In linear fusion the unity is in the vehicle rather than in the meaning.

Sophocles used linear fusion to achieve his famous irony: the audience sees a second import, unseen by the actors themselves, in the words the actors speak. A similar irony is not unknown to Pindar. But whereas Sophocles' double meaning is evident to the many in the audience and veiled from the few on the stage, Pindar feels that his meaning will elude the many and be seen by the critics.<sup>60</sup> It may be asked, however, whether the critics are not sometimes like Sophocles' chorus who remain within the dramatic illusion while delivering their comments. Critics constantly seek to decide which of two or more possible meanings Pindar actually intended, as if it had necessarily to be just one, and as if Pindar were a plain, blunt man, though he repeatedly indicates the opposite, calling his poetry arrows that sing for the wise, and showing a particular love for words like *ποικίλλω* and *δαιδάλλω* when referring to his work.<sup>61</sup> It is not clear that Pindar always or even usually meant exactly one thing and said it. The problem of the One and Many recurs in endless variants, not least in the interpretation of the deeds and sayings of those ancients among whom it first received its due attention. There is, for example, a tendency to look for one exclusive reason why the Athenians sent Socrates to trial and death, though the differing possibilities do not exclude each other

and seem likely to have cooperated in the causation. A similar tendency seeks, perhaps excessively, to determine just which of several possible meanings Pindar meant a word or passage to bear. Yet if the word or passage could carry multiple meaning, and do it gracefully, Pindar would surely want it to: *ἐκόντι δ' ἔγω νώτω μεθέπων δίδυμον ἄχθος* (N. 6. 57). The search for multiple meaning can admittedly become a kind of game, and interpretation can go out of control. But such are the risks of riding in the Pindaric car. It is still better to try to understand him according to *his* norms and practice than according to what one's own might be. Perhaps it *is* unfortunate that the otherwise unexampled *χρόμος* was proposed for *χρόνος* in N. 1. 46, and that a pun was then seen on the victor's name, Chromius.<sup>62</sup> Perhaps — though in Pindar least of all should one be surprised at finding a word not elsewhere extant, and Pindar did try to make connections between the athletic victors and the mythical parts of the odes. Farnell implies that any attempt to make sense out of the passage is hopeless, and he thinks the specific attempt just cited to be so extravagant that it “might be regarded as the death-blow to the cryptogrammic method of Pindaric interpretation.”<sup>63</sup> But this seems to contradict Pindar's own statements about the difficulty of interpreting his verse; and the aphoristic-sounding *κρυπταὶ κλαῖδες ἐντί* (P. 9. 39), though it refers in its context to love, could, one feels, be transferred to poetry. There would be no strain.

Still speaking of the snakes in N. 1, we may note that the infinitive *ἀμφιελίξασθαι* (v. 43) provides an example of ambiguity. The snakes were “eager to *wrap swift jaws around* the children.” The mention of *γνάθου* makes them biters or swallows rather than stingers, and the infinitive can refer both to the open, devouring circle of their jaws and to the coiling activity of their bodies. And there is still further meaning in the infinitive. It can mean that the heads move about the victims, feinting and striking as they go, for *ελίσσω* can express quick, darting motion. Again, the prefix *ἀμφι-* might be taken to connect the coiling movement of the trunks with the striking movement of the heads, so that, in a horrific image, the spiral would have been transferred up the back to the head, which latter, though its proper activity is to strike and not to coil, would be “attracted” into the behavior of the rest of the body.

A more sustained example of linear fusion is found in O. 3. 3–9, the ode being in honor of the chariot victory of Theron of Acragas in 476 B.C.:

Θήρωνος Ὀλυμπιονίκαν ὕμνον ὀρ-  
 θώσαις, ἀκαμαντοπόδων  
 ἵππων ἄωτον. Μοῖσα δ' οὕτω ποι παρέ-  
 στα μοι νεοσίγαλον εὐρόντι τρόπον  
 Δωρίῳ φωνὰν ἐναρμόξαι πεδίλῳ  
 ἀγλαόκωμον· ἐπεὶ χαίταισι μὲν ζευχθέντες ἐπὶ στέφανοι  
 πρᾶσσοντί με τοῦτο θεόδματον χρέος,  
 φόρμιγγά τε ποικιλόγαρυν καὶ βοὰν  
 αὐλῶν ἐπέων τε θέσιν  
 Αἰνησιδάμον παιδί συμμεῖξαι πρεπόν-  
 τως . . .

As is frequent in Pindar — and, one might add, in Sophocles — there is a clearer idea than there is a picture. The imagistic ambiguity is so thoroughgoing that Farnell writes of v. 6: “Whose crowns and whose hair are referred to . . . Pindar’s, the horses, members of the chorus, or Theron’s? Each has been suggested . . .” Farnell proceeds to argue that “whenever crowns are mentioned in an epinician context they are always the crowns of the victor.”<sup>64</sup> Whether that argument is valid is not the point here. The point is that Pindar’s language is at its customary tricks and is making feints (or strikes) in all directions, so that scholars feel they must ask just who or what got hit (cf. Pindar’s use of βάλλω in such connections)<sup>65</sup> and where the reference finally landed. The passage seems to have a clear symbolic unity, for so much of it has to do with standing and with uprightness and with feet. But is it equine or metrical feet? The song that Pindar sets upright is the ἄωτος of the tireless-footed horses. Clearly this refers to the physical horses of Theron’s victory. But is that all? In the famous Parmenidean-sounding passage of *O.* 6. 22ff, Pindar spoke of the horses of poetry. In *I.* 8. 68, he spoke of the Muses’ chariot. In *O.* 9. 23ff, he sends his poetic message more swiftly than the speed of noble horse. In *P.* 7. 3, for Megacles of Athens, he speaks of the horses of song. In *P.* 10. 65, he again speaks of poetry as a chariot. His fondness for describing his poetics in the imagery of games is well known. His poetry, like the intellect of Thomas Aquinas, is *potens omnia fieri*. It can be a long-jumper (*N.* 5. 19ff) or a runner on his mark (*N.* 8. 19) or a javelin-thrower (*N.* 9. 55) or a wrestler (*N.* 4. 93ff). It would be in accord with his practice elsewhere, then, if in the present passage on the chariot victory of Theron, Pindar were to assimilate the poetic to the athletic process. He might be expected to identify the horses with poetry and their tireless-footed quality with metrics, especially since metrics seem implied in his reference to the “Dorian sandal.” Further, in the Nemean passage about the runner on his mark,



there is a play on the dual sense of "foot": "I stand on light feet, catching my breath before I *say* anything." The image is of a runner, but Pindar fuses running and poetry by rounding off the expression with the verb "say," which has nothing particularly to do with racing. Or it would not, at least, if the poet were not Pindar. As his poetical feet were light and mobile in the Nemean passage, so here in *O.* 3 they are unwearied. Elsewhere, in *N.* 5. 1ff and *I.* 2. 45f, Pindar says that his images have feet that move and are not meant to stand in one place or ever to cease diffusing their lively message. If "tireless-footed horses" obliquely means "dynamic-versed poetry" then *ἄωτος* (almost Pindar's favorite word) can serve both the direct and oblique meanings: it would be a "prize" in reference to the horses and a "choice product" in reference to the poetry.

Thus Pindar has begun by directly alluding to physical horses and indirectly to poetical ones. He then proceeds chiasmatically: the direct reference will now be to poetry, the indirect to chariotry. Keeping the symbol of uprightness, he says that the Muse has stood beside him (one thinks of warrior and driver standing beside each other in the Homeric chariot) and that he has found a "new-shining mode to en-harmonize bright-festal speech with Dorian shoe." Before one exclaims in pain that "it doesn't *mean* anything" (as the children do in "Sound of Music") he would do well to recall Norwood's remark that Pindar's language is "a stumbling-block to those who translate each element into English and then remark that the English elements clash."<sup>66</sup> It is in Greek that the language makes sense, in fact multiple sense. The direct reference is to Pindar's lyricism, but chariotry is suggested, if sunkenly, in *νεοσίγαλον τρόπον*, and in *ἐναρμόξαι* so close to *ζευχθέντες* of the following verse. In Homer, *σιγαλόεις* is used of horses' reins, and the basic meaning of *τρόπος* is "turning" — exactly the function of reins. Though neither *ἐναρμόζω* nor *ἀρμόζω* is elsewhere used by Pindar in equine contexts, either could easily have been, and *ζεῦγνυμι* certainly is.<sup>67</sup> The oblique sense of the verses is therefore: "I have found glossy new reins with which to control bright sounds of revelry by Dorian feet." It will be objected that reins do not curb horses' voices but their mouths and that voices certainly do not issue from feet, and that therefore the image has gone crazy. Indeed, worse than crazy, for it might at least have been only the horses who ran wild, whereas now it is the whole rest of the equipage too! One can only refer the objector to a most jealous guardian of good speech, the French-Canadian teaching Brother, Frère Untel, who said that he wrote with an axe: "J'écris avec une hache (hé! hé! quelle métaphore! c'est une incohérence de méta-

phore que tu viens de commettre, mon petit Frère, c'est assez grave. Tu blâmes les élèves qui en font et tu veux nous passer celle-là?)"<sup>68</sup> Perhaps people would prefer if he wrote with a stiletto; it might seem neater, and an etymological relationship with "style" would be immediately apparent. But he wants to say that his prose does more than just puncture, it demolishes. It would also be neater if the Lord had said it was easier for a *rope* to pass through a needle's eye than for a rich man to get to heaven. A rope is the same *kind* of thing as a thread. But the Lord said "camel."<sup>69</sup> Neat figures are not always the richest and best. To get back to Pindar, if equine mouths are subject to reins, then why, by an easy synecdoche, cannot the reins be imaged as controlling oral sound? . . . and at precisely this point the sound ceases to be, if it ever was, equine, and becomes sound in general. And if not only horses, but verses and dancers, have feet, then the oblique reference to chariotry in vv. 4f can be taken as continuing metaphorically the direct reference to poetry in v. 4 itself.

As for the reference of *στέφανοι*, Farnell's argument that it must be the victor's crown will perhaps stand, if it be understood that there are poetical crowns for the victor as well as the more physical ones. But it might also be argued that Pindar, who is so fond of assimilating himself to athletes in struggle, would even more fondly assimilate himself to them in triumph, and would think of himself as crowned, a *poeta laureatus*. In *P.* 1. 100<sup>b</sup>, he uses "crown" to refer to a prize in the larger contest of life. And more than once, when invoking such successes upon the victor's house, he prays in the same breath for the success of his own poetics, as though he too had a prize to win.<sup>70</sup> It would appear consonant with the general tenor of his thinking, if we were to take the crowns of the present Olympian passage (the long discussion of which is now ending), and especially the crown of *I.* 7. 39, as belonging at least as much to poet as to athlete.

I have already suggested that Pindar's fusive style reflects a world-view that sees reality as convertible, in the sense that one part can mingle with and turn into another part. Perhaps "*invertible*" would be a better word, or at least it would complete the commentary on Pindar's style. His language is full of surprises, and constantly upsets one's expectations. He says in *O.* 1. 1 that gold is like blazing fire that shines at night. It is true that fire shines at night, but the resemblance of *gold* to fire ought more probably to be predicated on the fact that gold shines in *daytime*, in the light of its analogue, the sun. As if reminded of this, Pindar immediately speaks of the sun which blazes in the daytime in the empty sky. He elsewhere says that the preciousness of gold (which is

what he is speaking of also in *O.* 1) depends on its affinity with the sun.<sup>71</sup> Thus the expression has brought the opposites, day and night, together and has made us wonder which is dominant. In *O.* 2. 9f, Theron's ancestors are called the "eye of Sicily." This can be explained by parallels both in Pindar and others:<sup>72</sup> the family of Theron were simply the brightest part of Sicily, or its watchful defenders, or anything else one likes that makes good sense. As Norwood saw, Pindar's expressions become demure at once if one focuses on them.<sup>73</sup> But there is a sense in which subject and object seem here to be transposed. These famous people were not so much the subject as the object of vision: the eyes of Sicily were upon them, and so not they, but Sicily, should have the eyes. Again, in *O.* 1. 74, Poseidon, in answer to Pelops' prayer, appears "at the feet" of Pelops. If a god, why not at the head? Naturally not at the head, for Poseidon comes up from the deep! And Pindaric uses of *ποῦς* should not be pressed, for it is one of his most frequent words and displays a bewildering variety of meaning! All true, perhaps. But the point has still been made that it is possible for benevolent divinity to manifest itself from below as well as from above. Perhaps the most striking of all Pindaric inversions is in the fragmentary passage, so admired by Wilamowitz, where Delos is compared to a distant star that shines in the blue earth for the gaze of the immortals.<sup>74</sup> Again, in *O.* 8. 77ff, we read that dust does not hide the good fame of the still-living relatives of the dead. This too is an inversion for it is natural to think of dust as hiding the dead, not the living. In *O.* 7. 10, Pindar says that a man is fortunate *ὃν φᾶμαι κατέχοντ' ἀγαθαί*. One would expect that *κατέχομαι* would be used of *ill* report, as it is in *P.* 1. 96, and that some form of *ἀνέχω* would be appropriate here. Again, in *P.* 8. 3f, we hear of one who "drives bitter anger *into* his heart." We should have been more prepared for such violence if it were a question of expulsion. Perhaps Pindar feels at this moment that the heart of man is essentially good, that virtue is easier than vice, and that a man must be violent with himself if he is to be bad.

The most startling of the cited inversions would appear to be the vertical ones, those which imply transposition upward. Where Aeschylus, like the early adventurers on land and sea, is spacious in a horizontal way, Pindar seems stratospheric, like Daedalus or like the twentieth-century astronauts, and he wants to see man as caught up into the higher planes of, first, heroism, and then divinity. This upward thrust on man's part is matched by a downward condescension of divinity, and the result is the same: fusion. The way up and the way down are identical.<sup>75</sup> Pindar is both high and low, and compares himself now to

the bee and now to the eagle.<sup>76</sup> In his breaking down of vertical barriers, his two tendencies, toward altitude and toward commingling, seem to meet. He would be the last man on earth to erect an Aristophanic Cloud-city as a barrier between man and heaven, and his sun in the empty sky seems, in its aloneness, to beckon and to invite man to travel toward it up the arduous gold beams of heroism.

But it is always possible for soaring ambition to plummet, as Icarus and as Bellerophon did, and as winged hope often does. In the verses which close *P.* 8 of 446 B.C. (the last of his dated poems), Pindar's commentary on the human situation is an unusually sober one. But it is only more sober in tone, not in teaching, than the opening of *N.* 6, probably composed in the 460's. Nor is it radically different in doctrine from his habitual assertions elsewhere. On the lips of a poet, identical doctrine can sound sad or cheerful, depending on the mood. Man has an affinity for heaven, his truest home, but there is a right and there is a wrong way to attain it. He must not seek vainly to be Zeus (*O.* 5, 24; *I.* 4. 16) or to pass beyond the Pillars of Heracles (*O.* 3. 44f; *I.* 4. 12f); the brazen sky is safe and cannot be scaled by man (*P.* 10. 27; *N.* 6. 3f; *I.* 7. 43); and if man seeks by too unprocessed and sheer a leap to arrive there, he fails as did Bellerophon (*I.* 7. 44ff). Difference absolute divides divinity from humanity (*N.* 6. 2f). Yet it cannot be denied that Pindar has a feeling for immortality and for ultimate attainment. It is a feeling which finds fullest expression only in mystical form, especially in *O.* 2, which ode attests (at least, for heroes) to final attainment as the crown of process. In the interim, however, man must content himself with the modest lot, pursuing daily happiness and advancing in peace toward old age and death and what lies unseen beyond.

There is also a this-worldly immortality conferred by poetry, and often instanced by Pindar. It affects both the sung heroes and the singer poets, though Pindar's explicit emphasis is on the former. He was not given to such clear statements of his own immortality as the *non omnis moriar* of Horace.<sup>77</sup> Pindar felt too that there was after-worldly awareness of earthly immortality, which seems to yield immortality both ways.<sup>78</sup> Cicero wondered whether he would in the next life be conscious of his continuing immortal fame in this world, and contented himself with saying, rather subtly, that at least the present knowledge of his future immortality gave him happiness here and now.<sup>79</sup> Pindar clearly holds for some awareness. It may be of an attenuated sort, such as befits *εἰδωλα*, so that, whereas earth-dwellers hear voices, the chthonic dwellers hear only echoes. Echo is told to go to the black-walled house of Persephone and announce to Cleodamus the victory of his son (*O.* 14.



20ff). Ancestors can, with their chthonic minds, learn of the good fortune which is at once their own and their descendants' (*P.* 5. 101f), and the dead participate in fair glory since the dust does not veil the good fame of kindred (*O.* 8. 77ff). The dweller in Acheron may, Pindar hopes, hear the sounding voice of poetry (*N.* 4. 85f). Pindar does not anywhere dwell upon the poet's own after-worldly enjoyment of his fame, but that he would have hoped for such enjoyment seems a fair deduction from the identification he so often makes between athlete and poet as strivers for success. They should likewise be identified as its enjoyers.

It is especially in *O.* 2 that Pindar treats of the after-world as containing, for persevering and heroic strivers, enjoyment that is golden in itself and not merely a shadowy image of light or sound.<sup>80</sup> This is more than the dream of a shadow. But it comes as the end of a long and toilsome process, during which man experiences vicissitudes. He is like the fields, which bear fruit in alternate seasons, and recruit new strength in the periods of fallow darkness (*N.* 6. 9ff; *N.* 11. 39ff). Ultimate possession cannot be attained except by traversing a sea of vicissitude (cf. *O.* 12. 16). Eagles (which is perhaps to say, heroes) may bypass the fluctuation and arrive more directly (*N.* 5. 21), but for ordinary mortals there are two ills for every good, and this disposition must be borne with grace and made the best of (*P.* 3. 81ff). The rolling sea of days brings fluctuating fortune (*I.* 3. 19) but the sons of gods (that is, the heroes) emerge unconquered. Finley comments that, as we enter this final line of *I.* 3, a syncope takes place and there is a leap from a consideration of a mere mortal family to that of their heroic ancestors.<sup>81</sup> The fact that the leap is so easy might suggest that the family too (representing ordinary mortals) might themselves at one time be assumed into the scatheless state. Pindar would not be the one to press such a point, but Finley's brilliantly penetrating study of the basic Pindaric metaphor which identifies family with heroes and gods makes the thought seem not altogether unreasonable.<sup>82</sup> As an example of how the three planes of existence may be linked by even slight verbal correspondences, one may cite *O.* 1. Of the victor it is said that he mingled his master with power (κράτει δὲ προσέμειξε δεσπόταν, v. 22); the hero prays that the god may draw him near to power (κράτει δὲ πέλασον, v. 78); and the god had already appeared near beside him (παρ ποδὶ σχεδὸν φάνη, vv. 73f). The god, of course, is power: "the wide-smiting wielder of the mighty trident." Ideas of power and of nearness unite the three planes of being, and bespeak the feeling that nearness to power is not something dangerous, or, if dangerous, at least

not to be shunned, for great danger does not brook a fearful mortal (v. 81).

Pindar is certainly not dogmatic about man's nature. Fundamentally untragic, still he fluctuates, and once he cries out in almost Sartrean language, saying, not exactly that man is a "useless passion," but that he is a shadow's dream, defying definition: *τί δέ τις; τί δ'οὐ τις* (*P.* 8. 95). These words are in a way the easiest and in a way the most difficult in Pindar. Their absolute simplicity bespeaks a kind of ultimate wrestling with first ideas. But even in this gloomy moment he can make room in his thoughts for cheering themes, and can sing of joy even after pain (cf. *I.* 8. 9). God-sent splendor comes and invests man's life with an inburst of happiness. Finley's fine sentence is worth quoting: "This feeling for the golden moment that cancels past toil and almost cancels coming loss is wholly Pindaric and recurs with complex variations."<sup>83</sup> The golden moment is a share here and now in divinity. Pindar does not emphasize it as an earnest of a future attainment wherein divinity may be securely and not fleetingly shared. His intimations of golden after-life seem to rest on other grounds, notably on the identity and solidarity that obtain between mortals and their ancestral heroes. The whole question is difficult to discuss, for one lacks explicit statements from Pindar himself.

A famous fragment on the soul indicates that the Orphic notions of the soul's essential divinity and immortality were not alien to Pindar's way of thought.<sup>84</sup> Neither are they alien to the statement at the beginning of *N.* 6 that gods and men originate from the same source. The two statements in a sense contradict each other, for one has men and gods both proceeding from a source that is presumably neither, and the other says that at least the immortal part of man proceeds from the gods themselves, whether by emanation or by creation is not stated. Pindar could vacillate in matters of dogma, as is shown by his almost despair of fixing man's definition at the close of *P.* 8. He would have understood the fine lines:

I cannot see —  
I, child of process — if there lies  
An end for me,  
Full of repose, full of replies.<sup>85</sup>

The poem ("I Am The Way") in which these lines occur may be allowed to occasion the thought that in Pindar's, as in other systems, there are right and wrong ways to essay a journey. Jaeger writes: "It is tempting to suppose that the image of the way was also employed in

those pious doctrines of the other world which we have encountered in Pindar.”<sup>86</sup> To encourage by overt statement the human thrust toward participation in the divine would have seemed presumptuous to Pindar. There are things which are better left tacit.<sup>87</sup> But tacitly and implicitly he does seem to favor man’s ambition, if only it is properly guided. The *right* way must be through the long and toilsome task of assimilating ordinary selves to the heroic exemplars who are *mediatores Dei et hominum*. This exemplary notion of the way toward divinity is found in Judaeo-Christian theology. It was wrong for Lucifer to say, “I will be like the most high,” or to promise Adam and Eve that they would “be like gods.”<sup>88</sup> This was like trying idly to be Zeus. But Christians are encouraged to pray: *Da nobis per huius aquae et vini mysterium eius divinitatis esse consortes qui humanitatis nostrae fieri dignatus est particeps*.<sup>89</sup> For the Christian it is by assimilation unto the supreme hero, Christ, that he will become *consors divinae naturae*.<sup>90</sup> All believers have the power to become “sons of God.”<sup>91</sup> Pindar’s ascent toward divinity seems similar. It is as though the golden beams of the sun would escalate us toward it, if only we let them, and if only we abide by its terms and do not seek to make terms of our own. Pindar, for obvious chronological reasons, was not a Christian, nor is any attempt being made here to baptize him, even retroactively, fond though he was of pouring gracious water on other heads.<sup>92</sup> But one can after all point to similarities without proselytizing backward into history. It has already been remarked that sometimes Pindar spoke like Jean-Paul Sartre. But he was not that kind of existentialist either. He was himself.

In summation, one of the most valid and inclusive comments on Pindar would be that he was a good mixer. He mingled well with men of whatever part of the world, and he knew how to harmonize his themes with the temperaments of all regions — Athens, Sparta, Sicily, and the rest. This was part of the *καίρως* which he sounded. He was eclectic, like the bee, and culled beauty from every quarter, putting it together again in a unique symbolic fusion, so that, while not ceasing to be what it was, it became in addition something new. And he was like the eagle in the surge of his language and of his spirit toward divinity and a hoped-for fusion at even that highest level, though always on divinity’s terms. Soaring, he retained a humility, and did not seek to leap up unbidden to the brazen sky or to crash the divine party. Thus his tendency is lyric rather than tragic. He looks toward divine grace, which works every good thing for mortals, as the agent of ultimate fusion.

# NOTES

(Pindar references are to the Oxford text, 2nd ed., 1937)

1. N. 11. 46ff.
2. I. 2. 2, O. 1. 22, N. 5. 42, and I. 2. 26.
3. See Bernard J. F. Lonergan, "St. Thomas' Theory of Operation," *Theological Studies* III (September 1942) 375ff.
4. One may instance the activity of Athena in *Iliad* 5. 122 and 290, and *Iliad* 22. 276-99.
5. This view is cogently upheld by Cedric H. Whitman, *Homer and the Heroic Tradition* (Cambridge, Mass. 1958) pp. 221ff.
6. Frg. 119; see Hermann Diels, *Die Fragmente der Vorsokratiker* (7th ed. Berlin 1954).
7. See John H. Finley, Jr., *Pindar and Aeschylus* (Cambridge, Mass. 1955) p. 40. The present article derives largely from the sensitive insights revealed in this sublimely written book.
8. See O. 8. 59ff, P. 5. 54, O. 1. 81, I. 8. 71f, I. 3. 13f, P. 9. 80.
9. On this question see G. S. Kirk and J. E. Raven, *The Presocratic Philosophers* (Cambridge, England 1957) 348; Werner Jaeger, *The Theology of the Early Greek Philosophers* (Oxford 1947), 128ff; Finley, *Pindar*, p. 60.
10. See frgs. 35 and 27-31 (Diels).
11. Frg. 114. 7, N. 3. 77ff.
12. O. 6. 29, N. 1. 17f, O. 1. 22.
13. O. 6. 29, O. 7. 71, O. 9. 59, P. 2. 45, P. 3. 14, P. 4. 223 and 251, P. 9. 13 and 68 and 84, I. 8. 38, frg. 190. 3.
14. Jean-Paul Sartre, *L'Être et Le Néant* (Paris 1943) 705f.
15. 2nd ed. (Hildesheim 1959), 455.
16. *Odyssey* 20. 202f.
17. *Iliad*. 3. 445.
18. See Finley, *Pindar* 22; Finley, *Thucydides* (Cambridge, Mass. 1947) 38ff and 72; Whitman, *Homer* 88-92 and cf. 123.
19. See *The Philosophy of Literary Form* (Louisiana 1941) 26 and 77.
20. *Poetics* 1447 b 17-20, and cf. Jaeger, *Theology* 133. For further deprecation by Aristotle of Empedocles' powers of expression, see *Metaphysics* I. 985 a 4-5.
21. E.g., *Iliad* 3. 55, *Iliad* 10. 457, *Odyssey* 22. 329.
22. See P. 4. 212f, N. 3. 61f, P. 4. 257f, frg. 177.
23. See P. 8. 88-97.
24. Both inglorious things (N. 5. 16ff) and glorious (O. 3. 44f, I. 7. 43f). The latter two examples seem to contain a warning, not only for actual leapers toward the absolute, but also for poetical and nonpoetical describers of its nature. Cf. Empedocles, frg. 3 (Diels).
25. See the splendid book by Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (New York 1949) 49ff.
26. For example, I. 4. 65f, O. 2. 79f. The marriage in the golden halls of Heracles to Hebe (i.e., Bloom of Youth) seems specially to symbolize absolute attainment of what has been his only cyclically before. For he went through a round of loves, as well as of labors, passing in turn from Deianeira to Iole or to whatever nymph in whose cheeks Youngness seemed transiently to be camping.



27. See *P.* 10. 27, *N.* 6. 4f, *I.* 7. 44, *O.* 5. 27, *I.* 5. 14, *O.* 2. 79f. In the last place cited, Achilles attained the blessed realm, not by storming it (cf. *Iliad* 1. 164, *Τρώων ἐκπέρσωσ' εἰς ναϊόμενον πολίεθρον*), but because his mother carried him there after she had persuaded the heart of Zeus by prayer.

28. See Gilbert Norwood, *Pindar* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1956) 97. Norwood, at least in this place, implies that juxtaposition is Pindar's usual metaphorizing mode. This seems questionable.

29. A particularly clear example of quick juxtaposition would be *P.* 1. 86.

30. See *P.* 1. 81f.

31. It did exist in Hesiod, *Works and Days* 694. See under "Kairos" in Pauly-Wissowa, *Real-Encyclopädie*, zwanzigster Halbband (Stuttgart 1919) 1508.

32. *Pindar*, 168ff.

33. See Pauly-Wissowa (above, n.31).

34. *Ibid.* 1510ff.

35. See John William Donaldson, *Pindar's Epinician or Triumphal Odes* (London 1868) 63; R. W. B. Burton, *Pindar's Pythian Odes* (Oxford 1962) 46ff; and cf. E. L. Bundy, "Studia Pindarica I," *University of California Publications in Classical Philology*, vol. 18, no. 1 (1962) 17f.

36. H. W. Fowler and F. G. Fowler, *The King's English* (Oxford 1931) pp. 215f.

37. See *N.* 7. 23f, *O.* 2. 83ff, *O.* 9. 107f.

38. Norwood, *Pindar* 97.

39. *P.* 8. 6f.

40. E.g., *O.* 9. 22, *P.* 5. 45, *I.* 7. 23. This and other words which denote blazing and shining are favorites of Pindar's in epinician contexts, and such contexts, for him, cannot be divorced from poetry.

41. *O.* 1. 13, *P.* 12. 23.

42. *N.* 1. 18.

43. *King's English* 212. Nonsense it surely is, like the over-precise dogmatisms which appear in popular magazines from time to time, legislating which word may or may not be used in a given context. Words should be the tools of men, not the other way round. And this is one primacy which Pindar never inverted.

44. This phrase was originally used by Federico García Lorca in the *Llanto por Ignacio Sánchez Mejías* (Madrid 1935) 14, and the reference was to the courage of a bull-fighter. For the sake of clarity, I have shifted the reference to what seems to me to be an easier term. This lest a discussion, confused enough already, should become even more so.

45. On "virtual," see Susanne K. Langer, *Feeling and Form* (New York 1953) 47ff, and *Problems of Art* (New York 1957) 29ff.

46. From "The Dead," in *The Poetical Works of Rupert Brooke*, ed. G. Keynes (London 1916) 21.

47. *O.* 9. 48.

48. *O.* 7. 8, *N.* 4. 7f.

49. *N.* 3. 79.

50. Cf. some beautiful Latin uses of the metaphor of cutting: Vergil, *Aeneid* 9. 435f, Catullus 11. 22ff and 62. 39f.

51. See G. A. Bonney and J. G. Niddrie, *Latin Prose Composition* (Boston, Montreal, and London), 66f.

52. *P.* 1. 86f., *O.* 12. 14f.

53. See above, n.41.

54. In Pindar, "storm-footed" (the more difficult of the two phrases) occurs at *P.* 4. 18, *N.* 1. 6, frg. 208. 1. "Wing-footed" (unphotogenic though it is) is almost a cliché in current English, and it has never lacked pictorial representation either. Witness the images of Hermes, and even certain modern advertisements of athletic footwear.

55. B. L. Gildersleeve, *Pindar: The Olympian and Pythian Odes* (London 1895) 226.

56. See L. R. Farnell, *Critical Commentary to the Works of Pindar* (Amsterdam 1961) 345.

57. *Pindar* 153.

58. See *N.* 5. 19ff, *N.* 8. 19, *N.* 9. 55. And see below, p. 251f.

59. Especially arrows. See *O.* 1. 112, *O.* 2. 83ff, *O.* 9. 5, *N.* 6. 28, *N.* 7. 71f, *I.* 2. 3. For the javelin, see *N.* 9. 55. The Pindaric predilection for lyrical arrows may naturally have arisen from the oppositions and at the same time kinships between the curved lyre and the curved military bow. Both are related, though oppositely, to Apollo (see Horace, *Odes* 2. 10. 18ff). As the Homeric bow rang with awful music when Apollo shot it (see *Iliad* 1. 49), so Pindar's lyre sends out arrows. To his Muses he ascribes the Apolline epithet "far-darting" (*O.* 9. 5) and in the same ode he uses the echoing participles *πελεμίζων* (v. 32, in reference to Apollo's bow) and *ἐλελίζων* (v. 13, in reference to the lyre), speaking in this latter place of words that were not "falling to earth," as an unsuccessful arrow might. Aristotle (*Rhetoric* 3. 11. 11) refers to the bow-lyre metaphorical relationship as a common one. Perhaps the uses of *ψάλλω* are instructive in this connection, cf. *Bacchae* 783f.

60. See *O.* 2. 83ff.

61. See *O.* 3. 8, *P.* 9. 77f, *N.* 5. 42<sup>b</sup>, *N.* 8. 15, frgs. 169 and 184, *O.* 1. 105, *N.* 11. 18.

62. The conjecture was made by M. Schmidt in *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie* IV (1846) 462. See the approving discussion of it by J. B. Bury, *The Nemean Odes of Pindar* (London 1890) 20f. Though there would seem to be nothing inherently impossible about Schmidt's conjecture, the more convincing arguments seem to be in favor of *χρόνος*, see D. E. Gerber, "What Time Can Do," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 93 (1962) 30ff.

63. *Commentary* 248.

64. *Commentary* 25.

65. See *O.* 2. 89f, *P.* 1. 44, *P.* 8. 57, *N.* 1. 18<sup>b</sup>.

66. *Pindar* 97.

67. For *σιγαλόεις*, see *Iliad* 5. 226, *Odyssey* 6. 81. For *ἀρμόζω* in an equine context, see Euripides, *Rhesus* 27. For *ζεύγνυμι* thus used in Pindar, see *O.* 6. 22, *O.* 13. 64, *P.* 10. 65.

68. Frère Untel, *Les Insolences du Frère Untel* (Montreal 1960) 17.

69. Matthew 19. 24. See *A Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture*, ed. Dom Bernard Orchard *et al.* (New York 1953) 886.

70. See *O.* 1. 115<sup>f</sup>, *O.* 6. 105, *O.* 9. 80ff, *O.* 11. 10, *N.* 6. 26ff.

71. *I.* 5. 1ff. See Wilamowitz, *Pindaros* (Berlin 1922) 201f; Farnell, *Commentary* 363f; Norwood, *Pindar* 191. The sun seems to be the middle term which makes it easier to see why Theia is the matrix of splendor and the ultimate ennoblement of gold.

72. See Farnell's thorough note on *P.* 5. 17, *Commentary* 169ff.

73. See *Pindar* 97.
74. Frgs. 78-79. See Wilamowitz, *Sappho und Simonides* (Berlin 1913) 131.
75. Heraclitus, frg. 60 (Diels).
76. See *P.* 10. 53f, *P.* 11. 30 (cf. Norwood, *Pindar* 124ff), *O.* 2. 88.
77. *Odes* 3. 30. 6.
78. *O.* 14. 20ff, *O.* 8. 77ff, *P.* 5. 101f, *N.* 4. 85f.
79. *Pro Archia*, 12. 30.
80. *O.* 2. 68ff.
81. *Pindar* 66f.
82. *Pindar* 40 and *passim*.
83. *Pindar* 28.
84. Frg. 116, and see Jaeger, *Theology* 75f.
85. *The Poems of Alice Meynell* (Toronto 1923) p. 64.
86. *Theology* 99.
87. See *O.* 9. 103f, *N.* 5. 16ff, frg. 170, and cf. n. 24, above.
88. *Isaias* 14. 14, *Genesis* 3. 5.
89. A prayer said at the Offertory of the Latin Mass.
90. Peter, *Epistles* 2. 1. 4. Cf. the Preface of the Mass for Ascension Day: *Est [i.e., Christus] elevatus in caelum ut nos divinitatis suae tribueret esse participes*. In fact, transformation into divinity is what the central symbolism of the Mass is about.
91. John, *Prologue* v. 12.
92. See *N.* 7. 62. On water in *Pindar*, see Finley, *Pindar* 52f.

SUMMARIES OF DISSERTATIONS FOR  
THE DEGREE OF PH.D.

JOAN M. BIGWOOD — *Ctesias of Cnidus*

THE predecessors and contemporaries of Herodotus, the Ionian historians of the fifth century, are known only from the most meagre remnants. Quite different is the case with one of his most famous (or perhaps most infamous) successors, Ctesias of Cnidus, physician to Artaxerxes II for some seven years. Sufficient is left of Ctesias' influential history of Persia, and of his monograph on India, to permit a remarkably full evaluation of his literary activities and to shed perhaps some light on a genre of historical writing which is by no means completely known.

*The Sources for our Knowledge of Ctesias' Persica.* An assessment of Ctesias' merits as a historian depends, apart from some sparse citations and a brief but revealing papyrus fragment, on what is reproduced from his work by four authors. Diodorus, who used the original directly, not, as has been repeatedly argued, via an intermediary Alexander-historian, preserves a brief summary of the six introductory books dealing with the Assyrian and Median empires, his outline being supplemented by some very detailed excerpts from the history of Nicolaus of Damascus, excerpts in which there is no trace of contamination of Ctesias with another source, as has been alleged. Books 7-23, which treated Achaemenid history to the year 398/7, were summarized from the original by Photius in an epitome which is characteristically uneven, but which, one can be certain, is accurate in almost every detail. Despite its many weaknesses, it provides at least a sufficient basis for the evaluation of a large part of the work. An important contribution to our knowledge of the final books is made by Plutarch. The material from Ctesias incorporated in the Life of Artaxerxes (an interesting work for what it reveals about Plutarch's methods of composition), and the judgments passed on him by the biographer, provide invaluable testimony to the historian's absurdly dramatized manner of writing, to his overwhelming preoccupation with the more sordid scenes at the court, and to the starkly prejudiced nature of much of his account of contemporary events.



*The Ethnographical Tradition and Ctesias' Indica.* Only one of Ctesias' ethnographical treatises has been preserved in excerpts of any considerable extent, his *Indica*, a significant piece of testimony to Greek knowledge of India in the period before Alexander, and an account which was not only authoritative for a large part of the fourth century, but which also exercised notable influence on the accounts of men who later visited the land. The work is usually dismissed with a contemptuous reference to its fantasies. Disparagement is, however, unjustified. In many respects the *Indica* is very similar to parts of Herodotus' Histories.

Ctesias had not visited India and nowhere claims to have done so. But his residence at the Persian court provided him with an opportunity for learning something about the land, that is about the northwestern region which was controlled by the Achaemenid monarchs. That his sources were, as he states, the reports of eyewitnesses, supplemented by what he personally saw of Indian articles of trade, need not be disputed, and many of the absurdities of the account can be attributed to his informants, and to the undoubted difficulties of communication. Certainly Ctesias could speak no Indian language, and there is evidence to suggest that his knowledge of Persian should not be overestimated. His method of investigation is that of genuine Ionian *historiē*, and the structure of the work has clearly some relationship to the well-known schema of Herodotus' *logoi*. Marvels preponderate, but that is not surprising. Oddities and paradoxes, the natural ingredients of Greek ethnography from its beginnings, abound in Herodotus' accounts of regions such as the remoter parts of Libya, and one can remember, moreover, that many of the exaggerations perpetrated by Ctesias were also later perpetrated by men whose opportunities for acquiring knowledge of the land were immeasurably superior.

*The Sources of Ctesias' Persica (up to the accession of Darius I).* It is obvious from Ctesias' reckless criticisms of Herodotus, and from his consciously made contradictions, that throughout it was his endeavor to demonstrate the inadequacies of his predecessor's account of Persian history. Yet Herodotus, as is too little recognized, was an important source for Ctesias. In no part of the early books is Ctesias' account entirely free from contamination with that of his predecessor. It is not, however, necessary to believe that what is not derived from Herodotus must be attributed to the liberal imagination of Ctesias himself, as has been claimed. A comparison of his description of Babylon with that of Herodotus, and with the archaeological records, shows that he could correct and amplify Herodotus from sound evidence, that of his personal observations. Moreover, the resemblances between some of his

tales and episodes of the Iranian epos suggest that he was often influenced by Persian folk-tradition (an oral tradition and one which has no historical value). But the final product is very far from being Persian tradition or saga of any kind, as it is usually treated. The account contains a number of obvious inventions of the historian himself, and the whole must be treated as a compilation in which literary sources, traditional elements, and fictional material all play a rôle, a creation which has no historical worth, although undoubtedly it was artistically put together.

*Ctesias on Fifth-Century Persian History.* Ctesias' version of later events does little to redeem his reputation. True, his account, when it is a question of the milieu, is of interest and perhaps even of value; and certainly there are passages, such as his account of the upheaval in Babylon prior to Xerxes' Greek expedition, an account partially supported by Babylonian evidence, where his information reflects to a tolerable degree the historical circumstances, and where his knowledge is perhaps more detailed and exact than that, for example, of Herodotus. But such passages are significantly few; and significantly many are the sections which give evidence of naked bias, suspicious dramatization, projections into the past of features of the society of Ctesias' own lifetime, questionable "improvements" on Herodotus' account, not to mention outrageous errors and blatant fabrications. That his version of the Persian wars, or of the campaigns in Egypt under Artaxerxes I, contains items of sound historical worth, as is often alleged, is a conclusion difficult to maintain if one examines these details closely in the contexts in which they occur.

The resemblance between Herodotus and Ctesias does not go beyond superficialities. Ctesias was a man for whom serious investigation and accuracy had no meaning. His sole interests, as is evident from his protracted love stories, his tales of intrigue and adventure, and his sensational details, were in dramatic effect and in the entertainment of his reader, and his dramatized and sentimentalized narrative perhaps gives insight into a type of writing which one does not immediately associate with early fourth-century Greece, but which, one must suppose, was at that period, as always, eagerly sought after.

#### DAVID HENRY GILL, S.J. — *The Classical Greek Cult Table*

Apart from the altar and the cult image itself, the table (*ἱερὰ τράπεζα*, *τράπεζα τοῦ θεοῦ*) was the most prominent article of furniture in Classical Greek cult. The cult table, however, has received

little protracted study. There has been one synthetic account, an inaugural dissertation by H. Mischkowski, *Die heiligen Tische im Götterkultus der Griechen und Römer* (Königsberg, 1917), 41 pp. Beyond this we have only encyclopaedia articles, notices in general studies of Greek religion, and publications of individual tables.

Over 40 identifiable cult tables are preserved, and there are numerous references to them in the written evidence: 45 literary testimonia and 49 epigraphical. The combined evidence covers a period from the sixth century B.C. to the fourth A.D., and is very full. In the present study I have arranged this material into (1) a series of essays which discuss the uses, types, history, etc., of Classical cult tables, and which are based on (2) a catalogue of all known tables, and (3) a collection of the literary and epigraphical testimonia with translations and commentaries. Minoan and Christian tables are treated only when they throw light on the Classical.

In the essays I have distinguished three different types of tables used in cult. Type I was the table on which the meat of the sacrificial animal was cut up and distributed to the worshipers and cult functionaries. Type II includes tables on which food offerings were placed for the gods; either (1) as their unburnt portion of meat at a burnt flesh sacrifice, or (2) as a gift offering, independently of any feasting by the worshiper. A third class, Type III, includes all other tables that had religious or magical connections. In many cases the various types overlap, i.e., the same table might in practice serve more than one function; nevertheless the distinction is useful and necessary, since the origins and conceptions behind the uses are definitely distinct.

Tables of Type I are essentially an accessory to the altar in burnt sacrifices. The earliest and best reference to such a table is in Aristophanes' *Pax*, 1010-16, where roasted portions of meat are brought from the altar to the table; libations are poured over them; they are sprinkled with salt, and distributed to the assembled votaries.

The table in the *Pax* was doubtless wooden and portable. Vase-paintings show such tables in use; sometimes they are actually attached to the altar; in other representations they stand nearby. Sterling Dow's discovery of the large stone tables of this type from Athens (discussed by us in a forthcoming article in *AJA*) has provided a wholly new item for Greek archaeology, and shows how prominent a furnishing Type I tables could be. The earliest model, IG II<sup>2</sup>, 2343, of the late fifth century B.C., is nearly one and one-half meters in length; in the top it has three depressions (*eskharai*) with picked bottom surfaces. The cooked meat from the altar was brought to the table in trays and placed in the *eskharai*;

the picked surface, which would conduct heat less readily, was designed to keep tray and meat warm as it was being cut for the banquet. Later, these tables became even more elaborate, and the tray-design was represented in stone in the table-top. I have traced the design of these tables and their trays (also a new item for archaeology) from the late fifth to the mid-third century B.C. Most are from Athens; one is known from Delos, and there is one that is possibly from Palestine. Their designs show that they were meant to stand against an altar (as in the vase-paintings) or a wall, and in most cases they stood on solid, continuous bases of either stone or earth and rubble.

As accessories to the altar, these tables have their origin with burnt flesh sacrifice; and any god who could receive such a sacrifice could have a Type I table. They are not used in the *Iliad*, but their prototype may be seen in the episode of Eumaios in *Odyssey* 14. 418-38, where the swineherd divides the meat sacrificed for his guests on a household table (βάλλον δ' εἰν ἐλεοῖσιν ἀολλέα, line 432), and sets aside one-seventh for the Nymphs and Hermes.

Frequently the god's unburnt portion was simply left on the table on which it was cut, and thus consecrated to him. But, as SIG<sup>3</sup> 1106 demonstrates, a separate table was sometimes used. This I have called Type II (1). The practice of setting aside on a table for the god (παρατιθέναι ἐπὶ τὴν τράπεζαν, τράπεζαν κοσμήσαι) unburnt portions of meat over and above the parts that were traditionally burnt for him on the altar is probably a borrowing from another form of sacrifice (*infra*), wherein food was consecrated not by burning but by "deposition." I have argued that this borrowing, possibly from the Minoan religion, was introduced to supplement the relatively small burnt portion that the god received. The story of Prometheus' deception of Zeus at Mekone (*Theogony*, 535ff) shows that people wondered about this seeming imbalance. The prototype of this type table is also seen in *Odyssey* 14; it, too, is in the nature of an accessory, an extension, as it were, of the tables on which the worshipers themselves banqueted at a sacrifice. In historical times, as far back as the evidence takes us, the priest usually received these portions, though the sacred laws maintained the legal fiction of assigning them "for the god".

Type II (2) tables are those which stood in most shrines before the cult image and received unburnt food offerings. These offerings were "brought in" (εἰσφερόμενα) as gifts for the god, and consisted, for the most part, of unbloody foods, *i.e.* cakes, fruit, libations, etc. Several such tables have been found *in situ*; most have flat, unadorned tops, but a few have one or more shallow *eskharai*, perhaps for libations or for



different forms of offerings. I have followed C. G. Yavis, *Greek Altars*, pp. 42, 48, and argued that these tables are a development from the Minoan wall bench, a podium for holding offerings which stood against the wall in some Minoan cult places, and which is found also in early Greek temples, *e.g.* at Dresos and Prinias. The practice of consecrating food offerings by deposition may also be an inheritance from the Minoan religion; consecration by burning of parts seems to be a specifically Greek practice.

Under Type III, I have assembled a number of miscellaneous tables used in temples, at religious services, and in magic. They include tables for votive offerings in temples, the tables for the victors' crowns at Olympia, the table at the Diipoleia, tables used in prophecy, magic, on graves, and in the theatre.

There are also essays on general topics such as the sacredness of the cult table, which seems to derive from its association with the altar and from general Greek notions of table-fellowship; the inscriptions on tables, which include dedications, honorary decrees, lists of names, and the names of the gods to whom they belonged; the distinction between altar and cult table, which is a real one except in the case of Type II (2), since such unburnt offerings could be made on altars also, though perhaps only secondarily. There is a section on previous studies; on the history of the present study, and on the terminology of cult tables and the offerings made on them.

The catalogue contains forty positively identified cult tables and a sampling of twelve other pieces which may be cult tables, or which are related to them in some way. Whenever possible, I have provided for each item bibliography, provenience, description, texts of inscriptions with commentary, date of the table, and general comments on its features. Of the items in the catalogue, fourteen have not been published previously; the rest are republications, but in most I have ventured new identifications or interpretations. Of the previously published inscribed tables I have improved the texts of the following: *IG* II<sup>2</sup>, 1246; 3189; 4833; 4835; *IG* VII, 493; *SEG* XI, 4.

The literary testimonia are arranged in the alphabetical order of their authors' names. The texts are, for the most part, those of the most recent editions, and the translations are my own except in one case. I have attempted to present each reference with sufficient context to make it — with the help of the translation — largely self-explanatory. The commentaries take up disputed points, new readings and interpretations.

The plan of the epigraphical testimonia is, in general, the same as for

the literary; the order is that of standard epigraphical indices. I was able to obtain squeezes of several of the inscriptions, and have suggested new readings for the following: *IG* I<sup>2</sup>, 190A; 840A; *IG* II<sup>2</sup>, 676; 776; 1322; 1356; 1359; 1366; *IG* XII 7, 237.

The text is illustrated by 14 plates and 25 line-drawings.

JOHN E. REXINE — *The Unity of Authorship in Hesiod's  
Theogony and Works and Days*

This thesis is concerned with the gathering and analysis of available evidence to demonstrate that Hesiod is the author of both the *Theogony* and the *Works and Days*.

The first chapter consists of an attempt to arrive at a general dating of the *Works and Days*, which is the only one of the two works under discussion in which we have anything like historical data. The genuineness of lines 564–662 of the *Works and Days* will be defended and the historicity of the figure of Amphidamas is noted and demonstrated on the basis of available evidence. The historical problem of the Lelantine War provides data for placing Hesiod in a proper chronological sequence. There is necessarily a discussion of lines 635–40 of the *Works and Days*, in which Hesiod tells something of his father, his place of embarkation before coming to Askra, his failure at a successful livelihood, and Hesiod's attitude toward seafaring. This passage, together with any other relevant material, is discussed in terms of Greek colonial expansion in the eighth century and Hesiod's reaction against seafaring. On this basis it seems possible to place Hesiod in a general if not specific epoch. Any astronomical evidence that can be successfully culled from ll. 564ff of the *Works and Days* is used to support the view that Hesiod's *floruit* was around 700 B.C. The matter of whether the *Works and Days* is or is not a personal poem is discussed, and the view is taken that the *Works and Days* is a personal poem.

The second chapter consists of a detailed analysis of the *Theogony* in relation to the *Works and Days*. Some attention is given to modern scholarship on the problem of authorship here. A detailed conspectus of the ancient view on unity of authorship in the *Theogony* and *Works and Days* appears in an appendix, though material from this appendix is used in this chapter wherever necessary. It is argued that the *Theogony* is the earlier poem and that it is Hesiod's. Lines 22–35 are shown to refer to Hesiod himself and lines 650ff of the *Works and Days* may very well refer to the victory of Hesiod at the funeral games of Amphidamas, a victory that may very well have been achieved with the *Theogony*.

The primary purpose of this chapter is to show that both the *Theogony* and the *Works and Days* have a common world view; one from the divine, the other from the human, aspect. One poem could be described as cosmological; the other as ethical and practical. In both poems common themes can be traced. The henotheistic primacy of Zeus in *Works and Days* is discussed as it develops from the triumphant stabilizer Zeus in the *Theogony*, along with the fundamental Hesiodic contribution of *Dike*. The theme of Eris in both poems is shown to have certain things in common, but it is also shown how the *Works and Days* develops or corrects a previously taken position in the *Theogony*. The attitude toward woman is examined in both poems, as well as such obvious repetitions as the Prometheus story. Important too is the economic evidence that is common to both poems, and this may very well be connected with Hesiod's attitude toward women. Other common themes are discussed as necessary.

The third chapter is concerned with a comparison of the two poems on the basis of formulaic language and the oral tradition. An attempt is made to show that basically the same formulaic language and oral technique are used in both poems. Separatist methodology is discussed and refuted.

The fourth chapter attempts to demonstrate that in both poems we have semi-conceptual thought and that Hesiod forms, as it were, the transition from the pre-conceptual symbolic thought of Homer to the later attempts of the Pre-Socratics and the conceptual thought of Plato and Aristotle.

The general conclusion reached is that all the evidence leads in the direction of single authorship of the two poems — one mind, one master creator, behind both poems.

The appendix includes a conspectus of references to the problem of Hesiodic authorship for both poems from Xenophanes to Plato.

THOMAS WEEPLE — *Lucilius: An Introduction to the Satires,  
and a Commentary on the First Book*

The thesis is in two parts. The first is a general introduction to the works of Lucilius; it comprises a history of Lucilian scholarship, including a detailed analysis of those contributions to the study of Nonius which must be incorporated in future editions of Lucilius, and

a discussion of certain questions in the chronology of the Satires. The second part is an introduction and commentary on Book I, including sources and *apparatus criticus*.

I. *General Introduction*. The history of Lucilian studies, here reviewed from the sixteenth century to the present, and culminating in a spectacular advance within the past century, has been dependent to a large degree upon the parallel study of Nonius, from whom most of the fragments are derived; the history of this study also is outlined here, and in particular the crowning achievement of W. M. Lindsay, who in his edition (1903) applied to the text of Nonius his discovery of the latter's method of compilation and his clarification of the history and value of the manuscripts. F. Marx's monumental edition of Lucilius, which was published soon afterwards (1904-5) did not adopt Lindsay's principles or discoveries, although the revelation of Nonius' methods and the revaluation of the manuscripts are supported by compelling evidence. Accordingly, Marx's edition suffers from fundamental defects due to erroneous premises regarding Nonius' methods and to a restricted *apparatus criticus*. A new edition, as well as embodying Lindsay's discoveries, should also distinguish clearly between the basic factual material established by scholarship and hypothetical accretions.

Since it is of great importance, both for the textual criticism of Nonius (and hence of Lucilius) and for the arrangement of the Lucilian fragments in their proper order, that we should understand Nonius' system, its main principles are here described. In particular, the curious reversal of his order of citation from Books XXVI-XXX of Lucilius is examined in detail, and the various possible explanations reduced by elimination. I have concluded that the only reasonable hypothesis is that these books were contained in a single large roll, which (as Marx had conjectured) was not rewound after a preliminary reading and was then perused by Nonius in reverse, with the possible modification that the separate columns or perhaps whole satires (not, however, whole books) may have been re-read in the normal way. Next there is presented a complete table of all the lemmas in Nonius containing those fragments of Lucilius to which Lindsay's findings can be applied for the purpose of determining their sequence. It is found that the sequence assigned by Marx to these particular fragments requires correction in a few cases only; but at the same time the table incorporates an important negative principle, *viz.* that the fragments listed in it are the only ones whose sequence is determinable on the basis of their order in Nonius; in no other cases may Nonius be adduced as authority for a particular sequence.



There follows a survey of the manuscripts of Nonius. The deficiencies in Marx's apparatus are mainly due to an almost exclusive reliance upon manuscripts L(Leidensis) and G(Guelferbytanus), and to a depreciation of F<sub>3</sub> (the corrected Florentinus). L. Mueller, moreover, had exaggerated the importance of H<sub>1</sub> (Harleianus), now known to be a direct copy, in Books I–III, of F, and, in Book IV, of Gen (Genevensis); in the remaining books of Nonius it belongs to an inferior group. G has also fallen under suspicion, and so a modern editor will rely less upon it than does Marx, and will accord the greatest credibility to L, F<sub>3</sub>, and (in Book IV) Gen, all of which approach most closely to the lost archetype.

The chronology of the books of Lucilius is next examined. Of the three original collections of satires the greatest emphasis is placed upon the dating of the earliest (Books XXVI–XXX), because of the connection between the date of their publication and the date of composition of Book I, which is the first of the (chronologically) second main group and the subject of the commentary which follows. Cichorius' view, that Books XXVI–XXX were published in 123 B.C. (and not in 129 B.C., as Marx holds), while probable, must be accepted with caution.

II. *Commentary on Book I.* This is the more extensive portion of the thesis, and comprises (1) an introduction, (2) text, apparatus, and commentary, and (3) conclusion.

(1) The introduction resumes the problems of dating, with particular reference to the composition of Book I. This question, as well as being related to the date of publication of Books XXVI–XXX, is largely concerned with the date to which may be assigned the death of L. Lentulus Lupus, who had been *princeps senatus*, and, as Lucilius' enemy, was the object of his attack in the *Concilium deorum*, the main satire in Book I. The historical data are fully investigated; Cichorius' theory of an additional censorship year between 125 B.C. and 120 B.C. allows him to assign all three events, the publication of Books XXVI–XXX, the death of Lupus, and the writing of the *Concilium*, to the year 123 B.C. An assessment of this view and of the criticisms to which it has been subjected leaves the question fundamentally insoluble, and other dates of composition (such as W. A. Baehrens' choice of 125 B.C.) are possible. Further discussion and criticism of the various theories are contained in the commentary of fragments 7M and 37–39M.

(2) In the presentation of the text, it has been thought convenient to follow Marx's numbering and order, since the treatment of fragments as individual units should precede the wider question of sequence. The sources of each fragment are first reproduced in full from a standard

edition (an index of sources is provided). Thus the purpose is not to provide a new textual recension but rather to reserve the discussion of textual questions for the commentary, and in the *apparatus criticus* to give a comprehensive record of feasible variants and conjectural emendations, while excluding obviously incorrect or generally rejected readings.

The commentary on each fragment includes the contributions of scholars to date. Fragments are treated from the textual, philological, and historical points of view and in their relation to one another, the aim being to combine a compendium of previous research with a critical evaluation of different views.

The following fragments and topics may be specially mentioned:

- Fr. 1 M. Philosophical allusions. The question of a prefatory satire.
- 7 M. The interpretation of *lustrum hoc unum*. The date of composition of the *Concilium deorum*: objections to Cichorius' date (123 B.C.).
- 9 M. Lucilius and Persius' first satire. The possibility of another satire in this book. (See fr. 1 M.)
- 17 M. Lucilius' attitude to Graecisms.
- 19-22 M. J. M. Stowasser's theory of scansion.
- 24-25 M. Contemporary Roman practice in the use of Greek.
- 30 M. The number and identity of the speakers in the council.
- 31 M. Philosophical allusions.
- 37-39 M. Interpretation of *tempestatem hanc*. The date of composition of the *Concilium deorum*. (See fr. 7 M.)
- 48 M. Discussion of the phrase *per saturam*, and of the historical allusion.
- 54 M. Discussion of the specific reference to Lupus.

(3) In conclusion, an attempt is made to allocate the fragments (at least those which are amenable to such a process) to the most reasonable sequence in the light of the arguments presented in the commentary, and to frame them in a coherent context. The existence of an introductory satire (and possibly others), in addition to the *Concilium deorum*, is accepted.

*Bibliography.* In addition to the editions of Lucilius, beginning with that of Dousa (1597), the bibliography includes all Lucilian studies since the year 1900, and other relevant works. In conjunction with Marx's authorities it should form a complete practical bibliography of the author.

DOROTHEA S. WENDER — *The Last Scenes of the  
Odyssey: A Defense*

The last scenes of the *Odyssey* —  $\psi$  296 to  $\omega$  548 — have been despised and rejected for many centuries.

In the first chapter of this thesis, several hypotheses are suggested for the historical origin of these scenes. The first group of hypotheses attempts to explain how the section can seem so fitting if its author is not Homer; the second group, which assumes that Homer *is* the author, suggests possible origins of the difficulties in the section. We then assert the ambitious hope that this dissertation will persuade its readers to prefer one of the latter group of hypotheses.

Chapter Two deals with the Penelope episode. We digress briefly on the Alexandrian condemnation of  $\psi$  296– $\omega$  548, and reject the unitarian theory that by  $\tau\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\omicron\varsigma$  Aristarchus meant “goal” and not “conclusion.” Arguing that Aristarchus’ disapproval of the conclusion is not to be relied on excessively, we point out that he gives no documentary evidence for this opinion, and that the Alexandrians often based their atheteses on what are now considered fallacious critical standards.

Next we consider the problem of possible ending-places for the *Odyssey*. If the epic is not to conclude at  $\omega$  548, we find that only four other stopping-points are possible:  $\psi$  296, which would conclude the epic with an unanswered  $\mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu$ , and  $\psi$  299, 309, and 343, which do not have even the dubious authority of the Alexandrians in their favor. All four would end the *Odyssey* on a private note, which, we feel, would seem odd in Homer.

Odysseus’ epitome of his adventures is next discussed and found to be a characteristic Homeric device, for which there are striking parallels in the *Iliad*. Further, we note that if we accept the whole Conclusion, then each part of the *Odyssey*’s three-fold plot is epitomized at some point in the epic: the Telemacheia in  $\rho$ , the Sea-Tales in  $\psi$ , and the Revenge in  $\omega$ .

Chapters Three and Four consider the Nekuia. The standard Aristarchan criticisms about the geography of the underworld are dismissed as trivial. We then consider the novelty of Hermes Psychopompus. An examination of Homeric treatment of death and the afterlife leads us to the conclusion that Homer had no consistent system of views on these matters, and used whatever material suited his literary purpose. In this case, Hermes Psychopompus suited the bard in six ways: (1) a god adds importance and solemnity to any critical scene; (2) important deaths in the *Iliad* are always treated in an unusual

manner; (3) a guide is dramatically necessary to initiate action on the suitors' part; (4) Hermes plays a similar rôle in the last book of the *Iliad*; (5) Hermes has chthonic connections in both epics; and (6) Hermes bears a special relationship to Odysseus; he and Athene share between them the two "halves" of the hero's wisdom, Athene being the patroness of his civilized wisdom and Hermes the patron of his "cleverness" in the state of nature. This is the god's final bow in the epic. On the burial question, we have decided that here, too, close examination of evidence from the *Iliad* shows no consistent Homeric position. Only one scene (Patroclus' ghost speech) implies that an unburied shade cannot enter the underworld; other scenes, in both epics, strongly imply the contrary.

In Chapter Four we take up the problem of Amphimedon's epitome of the revenge plot. His story of the web is found to be chronologically consistent with the rest of the *Odyssey*. As for his blunder about Penelope's part in the revenge plot, we conclude that whatever the poet's reason for letting Amphimedon err about this, the amount of detailed information that the ghost gets correct clearly indicates that his speech was composed for our *Odyssey* and not for any other version of the tale.

Finally, we point out five reasons why the Nekuia cannot be called an unnecessary or irrelevant episode: (1) it provides the third epitome; (2) it provides Penelope with a fitting encomium for her twenty years of fidelity against odds; (3) it provides an impressive description of a funeral, in the manner of the *Iliad*; (4) it provides a last bow for several major characters of both epics; (5) it provides a final comparison and contrast of the characters of Agamemnon and Achilles with Odysseus.

The Laertes episode is the subject of the fifth chapter. After a brief discussion of some problems in linguistics, we demonstrate that the picture of Laertes given in this scene is entirely consistent with the rest of the epic. The problem of the servant Dolius, we find, is a problem of the earlier books of the *Odyssey* — in which he was inconsistently presented — and not a problem of this episode, in which he serves the useful function of ally for the coming battle. We point out that the rest of the epic clearly prepares the audience for a reunion with Laertes, and that the episode is not only suspenseful, quite in the manner of Homer, but also provides the climactic recognition scene of a masterful and meaningful series.

In Chapter Six, we discuss the aesthetic objections to the battle scene, and dismiss them as irrelevant. The scene, we find, is necessary, both because it has been "planted" for several times previously in this epic, and because of the Greek attitude toward blood-guilt and the



necessity for revenge. Also, we conclude, the scene provides an appropriate final bow for Athene, who initiated the action of the epic, and for Mentor (Athene) as a patron of education. Finally, the scene, with father, son, and grandson fighting side by side, provides the most appropriate possible ending for a tale concerned primarily with the family.

THOMAS M. WOODARD — *Electra by Sophocles:  
the Dialectical Design*

Although this thesis hardly catches a glimpse of a complete interpretation, it suggests that the *Electra* shapes itself around definite imaginative principles, which hold in place dramatic events, gestures, utterances, and personages, and which inform each line, each moment in the theater, so that every particular seems potentially meaningful to the mind's eye; seems, moreover, to hold a multiplicity of meanings.

To expose multiple meanings I discuss certain scenes and certain speeches several times over from different points of view, and show how these move complexly within some larger structures and larger *motifs*. Thus, many aspects of the play are rather arbitrarily neglected: what the interpretation implies about such extrinsic issues as dating and relation to other plays, about as yet unsolved textual and linguistic problems, or about the intentions behind the choral meters and behind various details of characterization. But perhaps these omissions allow us to remain somewhat closer to the drama as a living event, allow it to yield vital meaning from its own center.

Now, without denying that a summary does violence to an interpretation (as an interpretation does to a play), I shall try to sketch the skeleton of my thesis. From the outset I emphasize the omnipresence of contrasts, between two characters in the same scene, between adjoining scenes, between ideas or kinds of diction. And I argue that all the contrasts wherever they appear ultimately form two distinct worlds. Orestes and Electra sum up and symbolize these two worlds, which are initially separated or opposed but which the reunion of hero and heroine reconciles or harmonizes with the result that partnership in vengeance succeeds. That is one sort of dialectic in the play; another appears in the informing power of concepts in the make-up of each figure, and in the interplay of event and event. I stress that the characters define themselves in terms of numerous but not innumerable traits, especially modes of speech or thought, which are not just fragments of personality but facets of universal principles.

Each chapter and each section of each chapter begins with the division in the Prologue between the men's discussion and Electra's monody, the effect this would have in the theater, and its implicit meanings. For, in the course of the Prologue, we pass abruptly from one dramatic world to another: from the men's joint plotting to a woman's solitary lament; from brisk, serious confidence to intense, lyric despair; from rational debate to passionate ritual. First, metaphors enforce a distinction between an Athenian man's public world of government, business, and the military, on one hand, and an Athenian woman's domestic world of family cares and suffering, on the other. Then I develop a contrast between two moral codes or patterns of heroism: a masculine *arete*, detached, efficient, directed toward an external goal; and a feminine *arete*, absolute, engrossed in its own subjective existence, full of yearning and seemingly endless venom. I trace the vicissitudes of these two moral worlds throughout the play and claim that by the end they have achieved an integration strongly reminiscent of the Homeric Odysseus.

Second, I locate the heart of the play in the dialectic of *logos* and *ergon*, two principles grounded in the distinct *mores* and personalities of the two main characters but thrusting out into the most general implications, epistemological, psychological, metaphysical. Orestes lives by *erga* (acts, facts, external realities), and his sensibility, or rather lack of it, can be appreciated only if we understand how *erga* delimit and define his worldly world. For him *logoi* are mere instruments, means to the end of *ergon* (the deed of vengeance and its rewards). For Electra, however, *logoi* (utterances, beliefs, internal realities) are ends in themselves, and she lives for them and by them alone (her laments, commands, wrangling, wishing). Other people's *erga* afflict her and exacerbate her inwardness. This dialectic controls each scene, as it develops from the cleavage between *ergon* and *logos* in the Prologue to their reunion, and to their coordination in the events of the Exodos. It is neither abstract nor allegorical, but lives within the characters and their history. To reach coordination both Electra and Orestes must change.

Third, the contrasting worlds and world-views of the men and the women express themselves in other principles closely related to *logos* and *ergon*, particularly those involving space, time, and deity. These also develop dialectically, and allow us to see the outlines of the Sophoclean cosmos which contains them. Furthermore, we find that these *motifs* shape the dramatic form of the play, in such a way that its apparent unity of time, place, and agent reveals duality and dialectic. Human agents, for instance, act alongside of divine, or rather suggest

divine activity; and Electra's scenes bring another dimension of time and place on stage just as she does.

Fourth, as a final major imaginative principle, to an extent embracing the others, I comment on the movement of life and death in the play, evident in Orestes' feigned catastrophe, in Electra's acceptance of it, and in the reversals of the final scenes. Electra's life amounts to living death and contrasts with the men's bodily vitality in the Prologue; she recovers life with the recognition of Orestes; and the partners go on to overthrow the tyrants who would prefer them dead. The rhythm of rising and falling, and the importance of reversals in the plot and structure, impress on us, I believe, the operation of *Dike* and help us to define this universal force in its Sophoclean sense: *Dike* is dialectical, and deals out life and death, justly but harshly. Its ambiguity resembles that of violence, bringing both achievement and destruction.

Fifth, we can better appreciate Sophocles' intentions in the *Electra* by keeping before our eyes its dramatic atmosphere, its style and tone in the theater. Most important, the *Electra* is composed of two dramatic genres, as, indeed, it is of two plots: the men's adventure, a suspenseful revenge plot, the conventions and tone of high melodrama; and the course of Electra's experience, the iterative pathos of the older tragedy. Thus Orestes and the men dominate the beginning and end of the play, and Electra, the lengthy middle. The drama of Orestes has often been considered a frame for that of Electra. But I believe that, with equal justification, we can see an inverse relation between the two dramas or plots; the inverse of a play within a frame is a play within a play. In the theater Sophocles forces us to keep a double perspective on Electra: her experiences are qualified for us by Orestes' presence; her world, by the men's. Electra and her scenes thus live in a borderland between tragedy and irony. But even this borderland and its heroine lie within a larger order, the *Electra* as a whole. The whole maintains in equilibrium two different genres, and two different worlds, and the tension between these. Contrast and irony are most acute when the Paedagogus tells his tale and when Electra mourns over the urn. In the so-called Exodos the two worlds are side by side, straining together; we cannot relax until the last line. Electra, instructed by joy and rebuked by necessity, yields her world, in part, to the arms of Orestes. She loses something of her noble excess and purity in this martial marriage; but she gains completion, justice, and hope of freedom. In the midst of the Exodos we are torn between her loss and her gain, between victory and horror, between the detached excitement of melodrama and the emotional involvement of tragedy. But the end leaves us somewhat beyond this

ambiguity: we see the whole action, organic, inevitable, coherent, providential. And we reflect that the action reflects the cosmos.

In this dialectical tragedy, as I should like to call it, all persons and events exist in an *agon* of the opposites that they symbolize; and on the handling of opposites depends success or defeat. In his own handling of word and act, permanence and change, life and death, in the *Electra*, Sophocles triumphs very much as his heroes do.









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## DATE DUE

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Mar 29 '66

May 31 '66

Sep 1 '66

JUN 12 '66

MAY 4 '84

MAR 21 '80

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